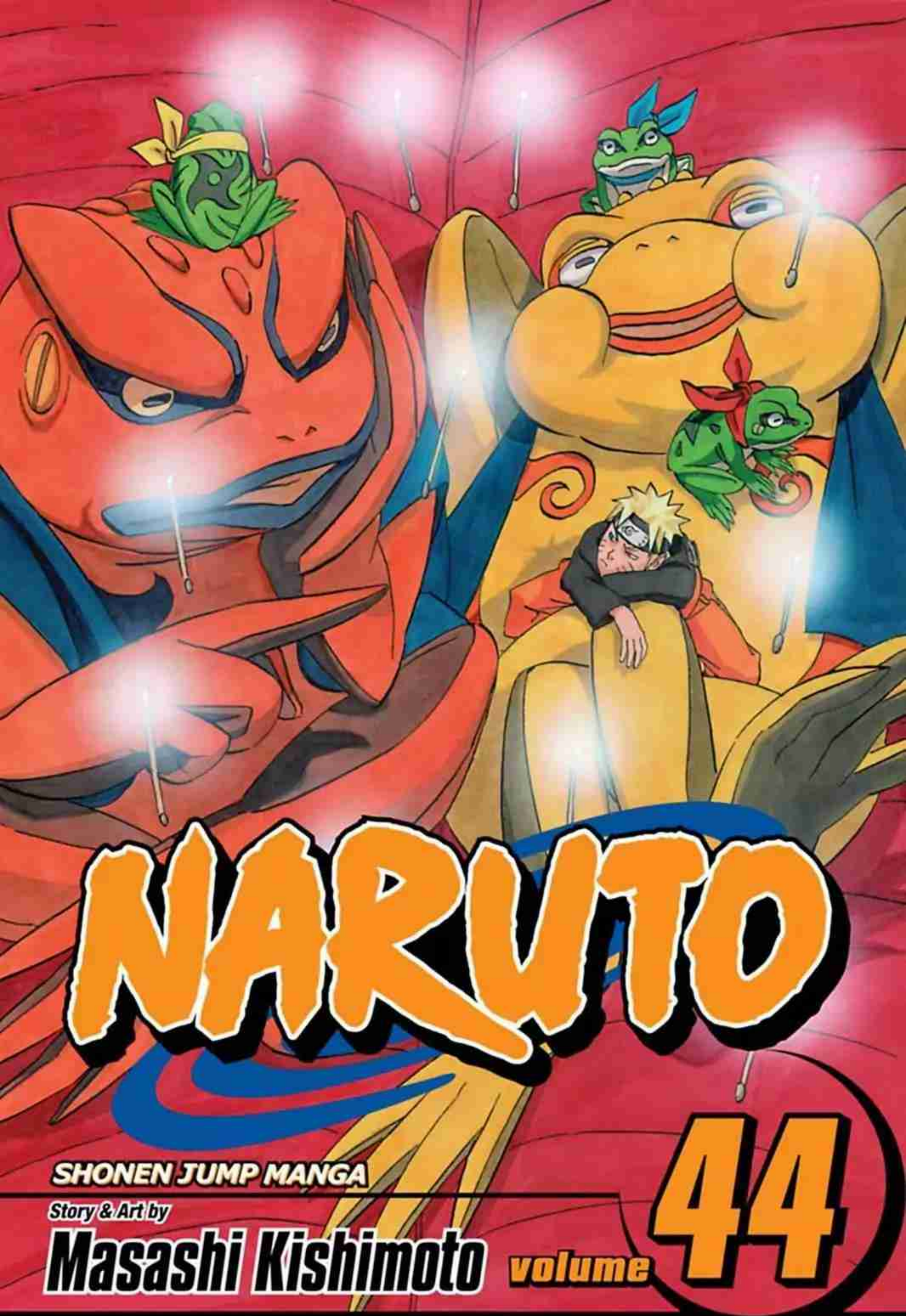
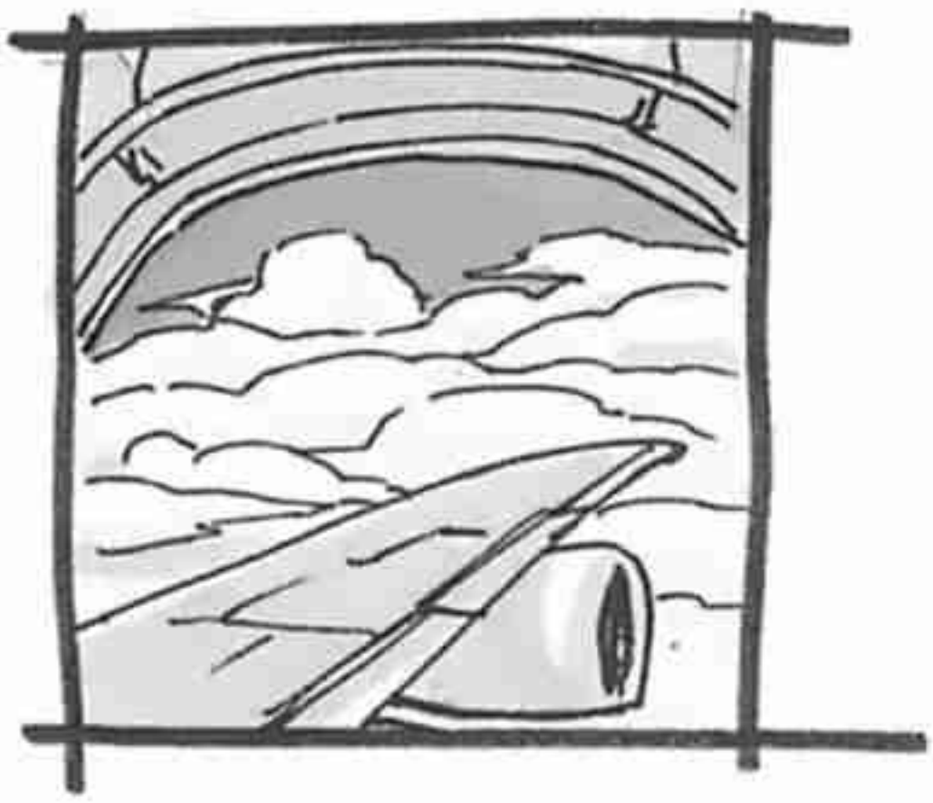

NARUTO
SHONEN JUMP MANGA
Story & Art by
Masashi Kishimoto
volume 44



I went home to visit my parents for the first time in a long while. The clouds I saw out the airplane window were very pleasant and made me remember that I like clouds.

—*Masashi Kishimoto, 2008*

Author/artist Masashi Kishimoto was born in 1974 in rural Okayama Prefecture, Japan. After spending time in art college, he won the Hop Step Award for new manga artists with his manga **Karakuri** (Mechanism). Kishimoto decided to base his next story on traditional Japanese culture. His first version of **Naruto**, drawn in 1997, was a one-shot story about fox spirits; his final version, which debuted in **Weekly Shonen Jump** in 1999, quickly became the most popular ninja manga in Japan.

**NARUTO VOL. 44**
**The SHONEN JUMP Manga Edition**

STORY AND ART BY MASASHI KISHIMOTO

Translation/Mari Morimoto
English Adaptation/Deric A. Hughes
Touch-up Art & Lettering/Mark McMurray
Design/Gerry Serrano
Series Editor/Joel Enos
Editor/Megan Bates

Editor in Chief, Books/Alvin Lu
Editor in Chief, Magazines/Marc Weidenbaum
VP, Publishing Licensing/Rika Inouye
VP, Sales & Product Marketing/Gonzalo Ferreyra
VP, Creative/Linda Espinosa
Publisher/Hyoe Narita

NARUTO © 1999 by Masashi Kishimoto. All rights reserved. First published in Japan in 1999 by SHUEISHA Inc., Tokyo. English translation rights arranged by SHUEISHA Inc. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this publication are entirely fictional.

No portion of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without written permission from the copyright holders.

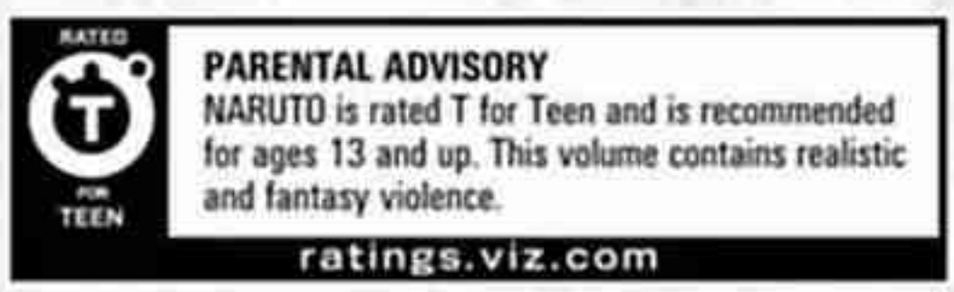
The rights of the author(s) of the work(s) in this publication to be so identified have been asserted in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Printed in the U.S.A.

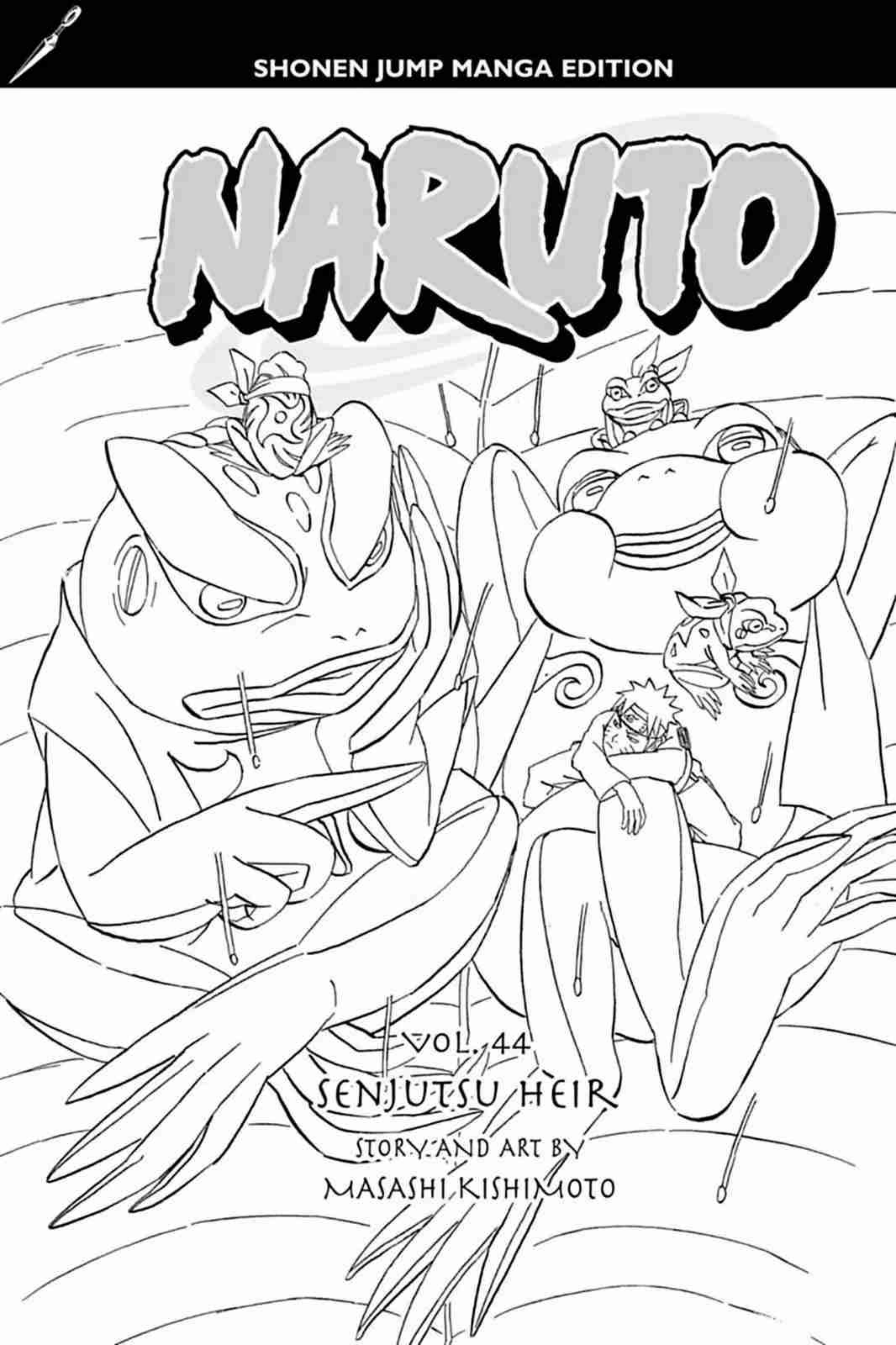
Published by VIZ Media, LLC
P.O. Box 77010
San Francisco, CA 94107

SHONEN JUMP Manga Edition
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
First printing, April 2009

www.viz.com



SHONEN JUMP MANGA EDITION



# CHARACTERS

Naruto ナルト

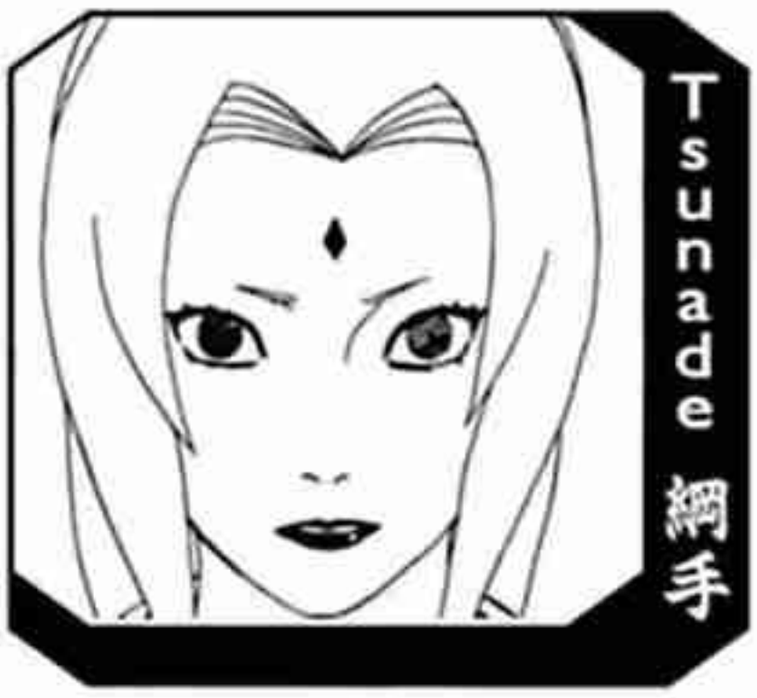
Sasuke サスケ

Kakashi カカシ

Sakura サクラ

Sai サイ

Yamato ヤマト


Tsunade 綱手

Jiraiya 自来也

## THE STORY SO FAR...

Naruto, the biggest troublemaker at the Ninja Academy in the Village of Konohagakure, finally becomes a ninja along with his classmates Sasuke and Sakura. They grow and mature through countless trials and battles. However, Sasuke, unable to give up his quest for vengeance, leaves Konohagakure to seek Orochimaru and his power…

Two years pass. Naruto and his comrades grow up and head out once more. As their fierce battles against the Tailed Beast-targeting Akatsuki rage on, Sasuke rebels against Orochimaru and takes everything from him. Sasuke then gathers new companions and chases after Itachi. The heroic sibling battle eventually concludes with Itachi's grim death. Sasuke may have fulfilled his lifelong goal, but Madara then tells him the tragic truth about his older brother, Itachi–how he achieved revenge against the Uchiha clan by allowing Sasuke to defeat him and become Konaha's hero. After discovering Itachi's true motivations, Sasuke renames his team Taka, claiming to exist for one sole reason: to *destroy Konoha*!!

# NARUTO

## VOL. 44
## SENJUTSU HEIR

## CONTENTS

NUMBER 403: TEARS 7

NUMBER 404: TAKA & AKATSUKI 25

NUMBER 405: INHERITANCE 43

NUMBER 406: THE KEY TO THE FUTURE 61

NUMBER 407: ADDRESSEE: NARUTO 79

NUMBER 408: FUKASAKU'S PROPOSITION 97

NUMBER 409: SENJUTSU HEIR...!! 115

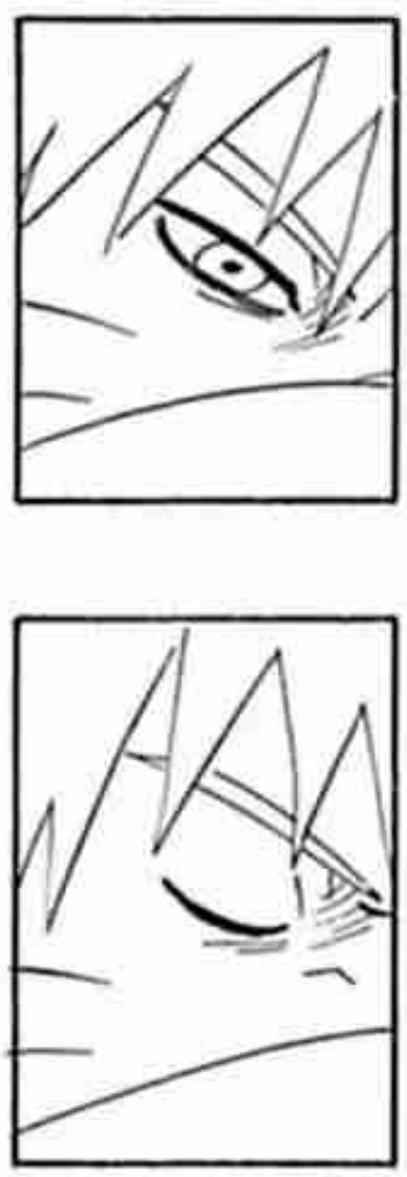
NUMBER 410: THE BATTLE AT STORM CLOUD RAVINE!! 133

NUMBER 411: EIGHT TAILS VS. SASUKE!! 154

NUMBER 412: QUIVERS OF ANTICIPATION 173

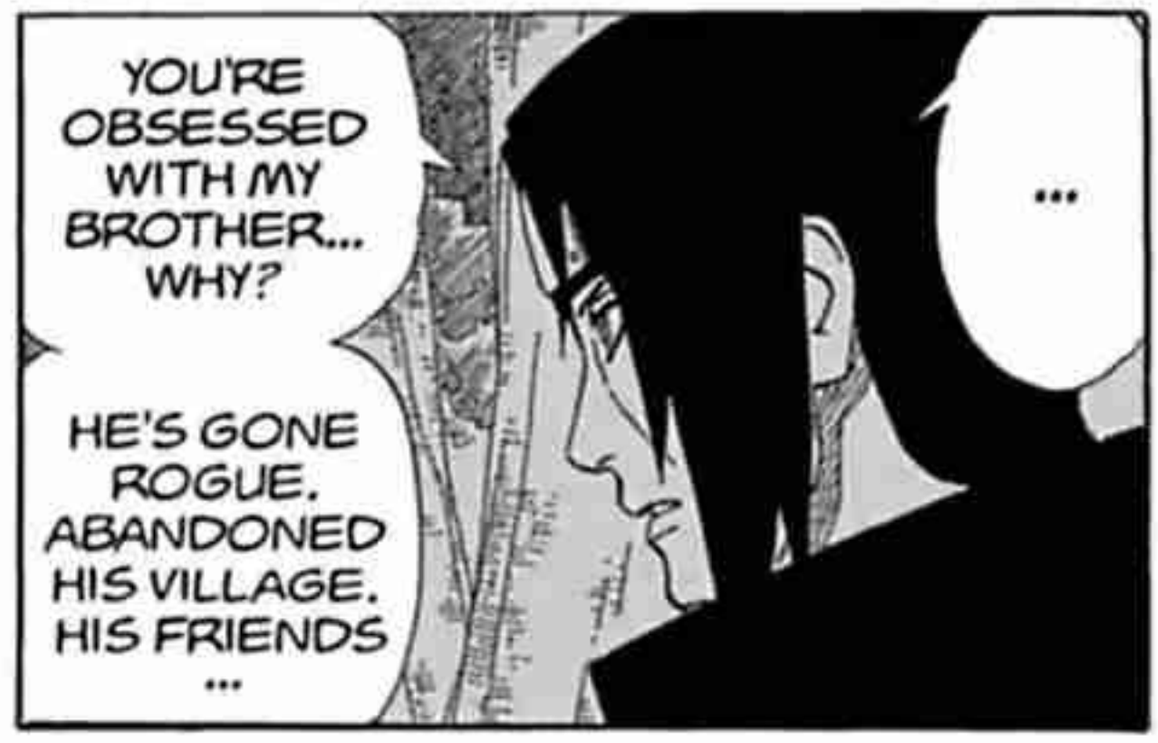
Number 403: Tears

YOU'RE ALONE HERE.
YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO RUN.
WHAT-EVER!



by Naruto

BESIDES, WHY WOULD I WANT TO RUN?!
IF I CATCH YOU, I'LL GET TO SEE SASUKE AGAIN!!
I CAN BE ANY NUMBER FROM ONE TO ONE THOUSAND!


YOU'RE OBSESSED WITH MY BROTHER... WHY?
HE'S GONE ROGUE. ABANDONED HIS VILLAGE. HIS FRIENDS ...
...

...BUT HE'S MORE OF A BROTHER TO ME THAN YOU ARE TO HIM!!
WE MAY NOT BE BLOOD...

RRROAR !!

...

FLICK

...I'LL SAY IT AGAIN.

I JUST WANT TO TALK.

YOU ARE ALREADY WITHIN MY GENJUTSU.

WEEN

BUT WHAT IF IT DOESN'T GO THE WAY YOU WANT?

YOU'VE BEEN TRYING TO TAKE SASUKE BACK TO KONOHA.

?!

BUT WHAT IF THE OPPOSITE HAPPENS?
EVEN IF BY FORCE, HUH... I SURE, IF YOU'RE LUCKY, SASUKE WILL OBEDIENTLY RETURN TO THE VILLAGE.

I'LL DO ANY-THING TO MAKE IT HAPPEN!

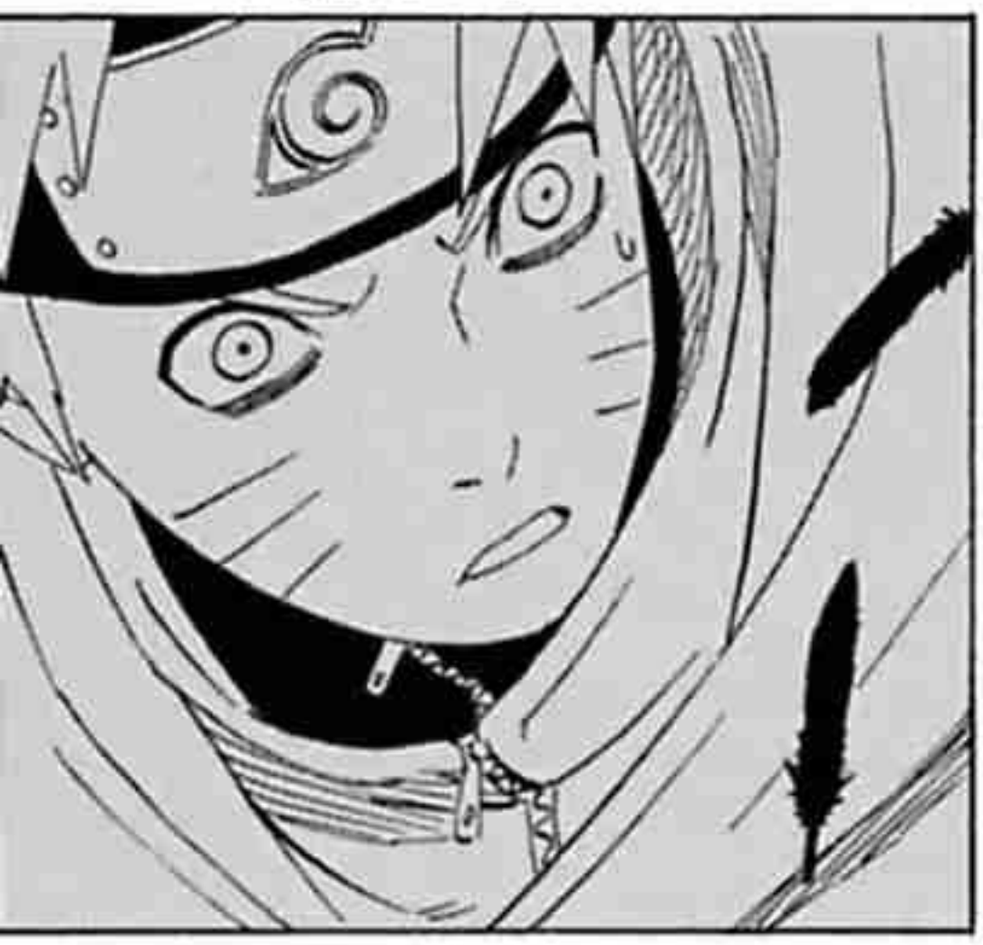
WHAT IF SASUKE WERE TO ATTACK KONOHA? WHAT WOULD YOU DO THEN?
YOU JUST SAID YOU CONSIDER SASUKE TO BE LIKE A BROTHER.

HUH...?

WOULD YOU BE ABLE TO STOP HIM?

HE CAN EASILY BE DYED ANY COLOR.
SASUKE IS STILL A BLANK CANVAS.

WHY WOULD SASUKE ...
...DO SOME-THING LIKE THAT?!



EVEN KILL HIM, IF NEED BE...?

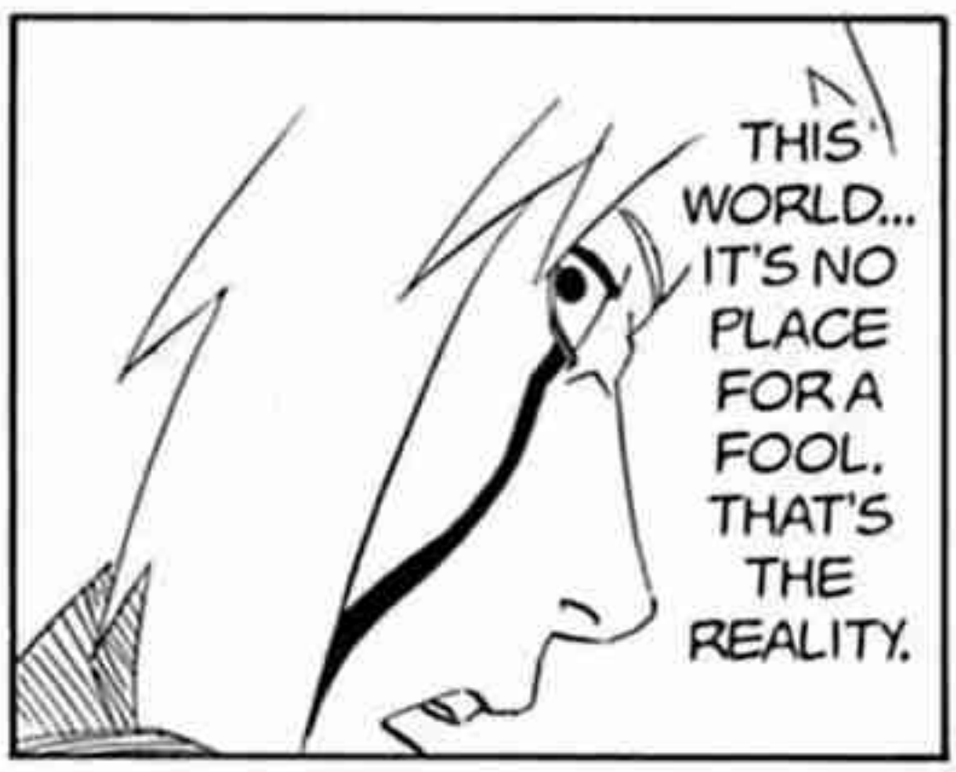
I WOULD DEFEND KONOHA!
BUT I WOULD ALSO STOP SASUKE WITHOUT KILLING HIM!

COULD YOU WEIGH SASUKE AGAINST KONOHA ON A SET OF SCALES?

...YOUR TALES ARE ALL FANTASIES... SHINOBI MUST SOMETIMES MAKE VERY HARSH DECISIONS.
YOU'RE SUCH A CHILD...

HE WAS DESTINED TO LEAVE, SOONER OR LATER. DON'T BLAME YOURSELF... YOU MUST FORGET.

YOU MUST FORGET SASUKE. UNDERSTAND?



...THAT'S MY SHINOBI WAY!
I NEVER GO BACK ON MY WORD...

UGH!
WHOP

!

I MUST GO...
DON'T JUST STAND THERE!
COME ON! LET'S FINISH THIS!

WHAT'S GOING ON?

SWISH
I HAVE SHARED SOME OF MY POWER WITH YOU.
THOUGH I HOPE THE DAY WHEN YOU WILL HAVE TO USE IT NEVER COMES.

I HAVE AN IMPORTANT MATTER TO ATTEND TO.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING? THE PREPARATIONS ARE ALREADY COMPLETED.

...AND...

WHEN I LOOK UPON THE FULL MOON...

IT TAKES ME BACK TO THAT NIGHT...

...MEMORIES I HAVE BEEN TRYING TO FORGET.

FAINT MEMORIES STORED DEEP IN MY HEART ARE FLOATING BACK TO THE SURFACE.

NOW I CAN FINALLY RECALL THINGS ABOUT ITACHI...

...YOU WILL FIND ME AGAIN.

AND SOMEDAY, WHEN YOU HAVE THE SAME EYES AS I...

KEEP RUNNING... AND RUNNING ... ... CLINGING DESPERATELY TO LIFE!

HUF

HUF

TAK

!

...

WAIT!!

TAK

SHUP

FTAP
FTAP
FTAP
TMP
WOOSH

SWSH

THUNK

HUF
HUF
THP

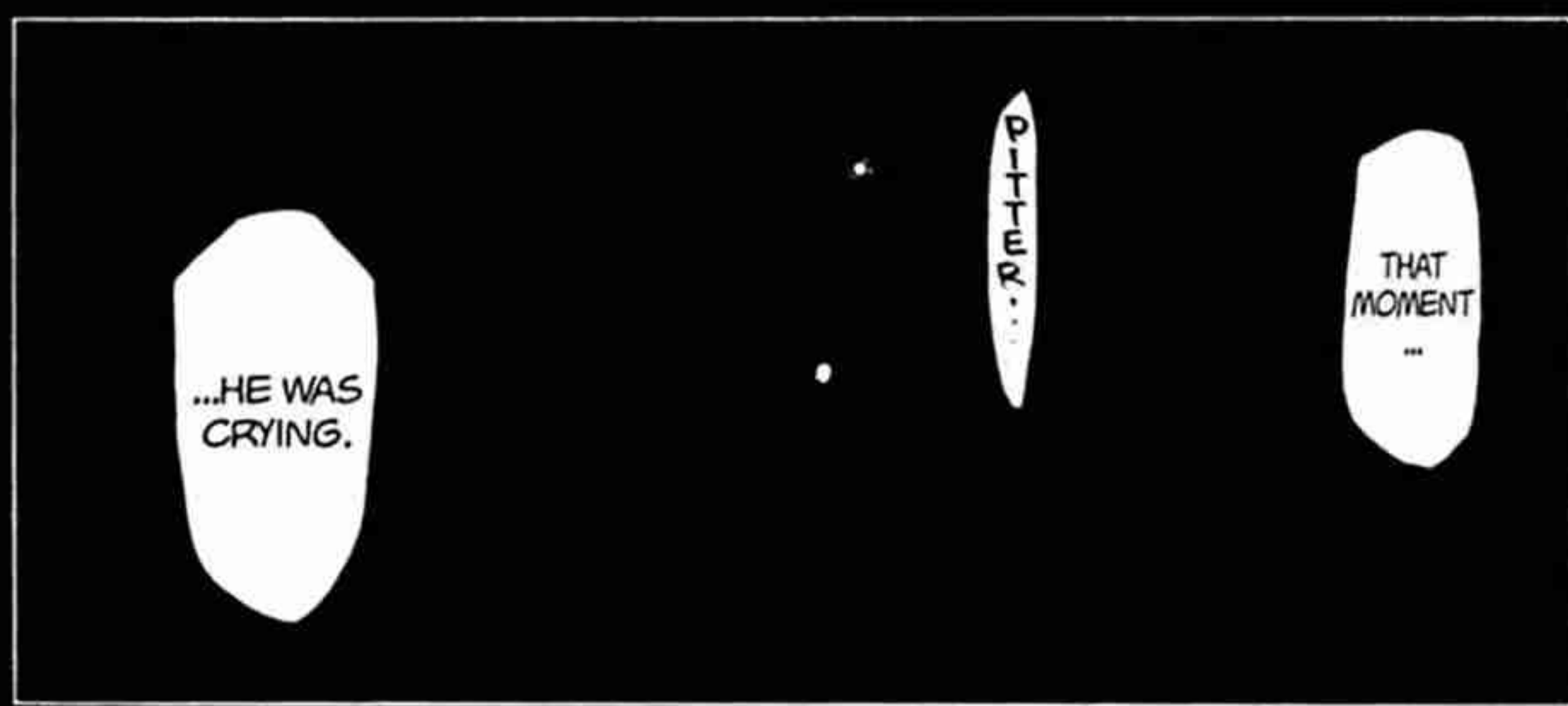
TWEEK
FDUP

HUF
GASP

酒

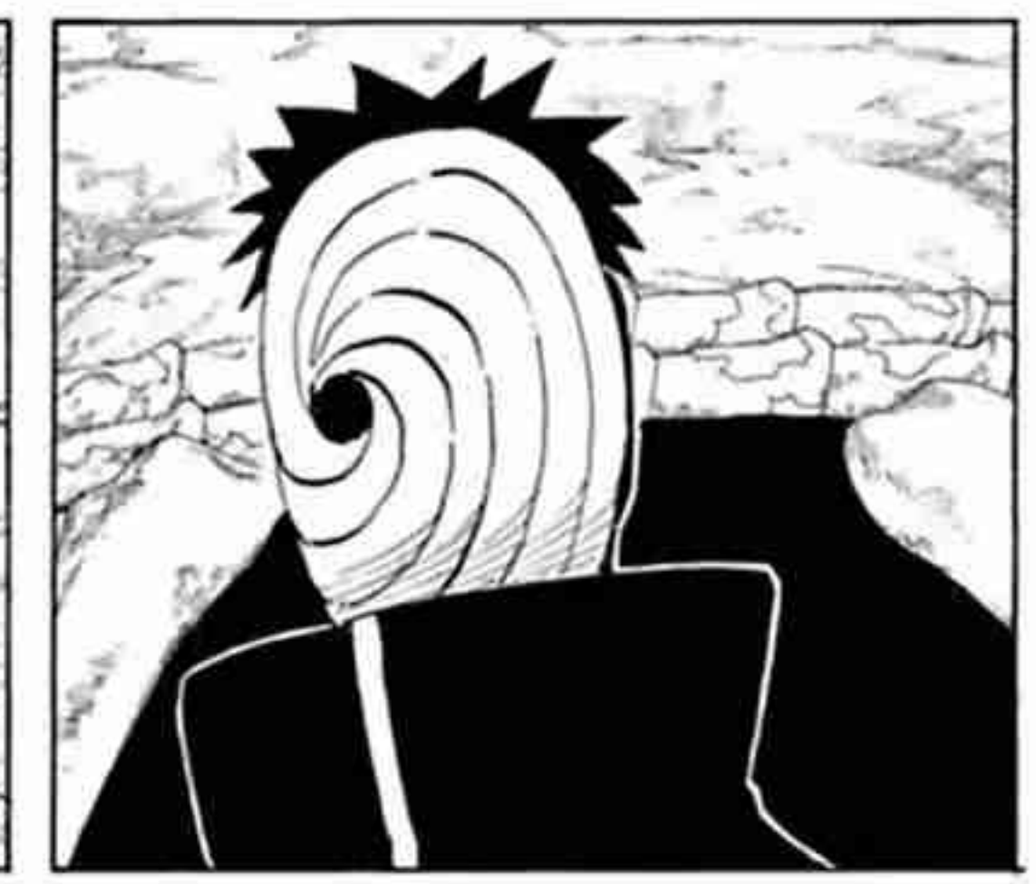
WRRGLE

THUD

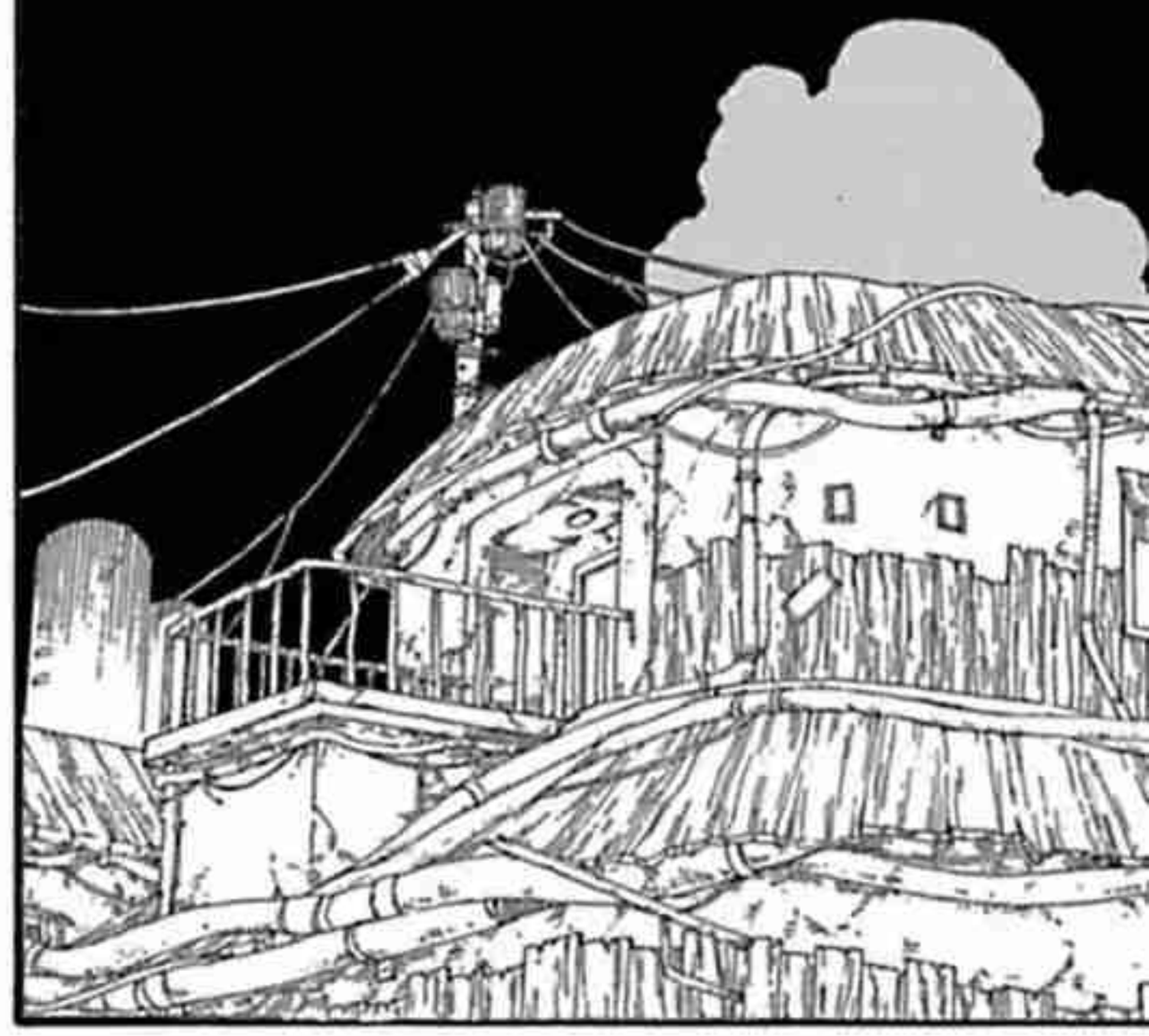

...HE WAS CRYING.
PITTER...
THAT MOMENT ...

I THOUGHT... I HAD IMAGINED IT.

AND THEN I FORGOT ABOUT IT.



IT SEEMS WHAT YOU TOLD ME IS TRUE.



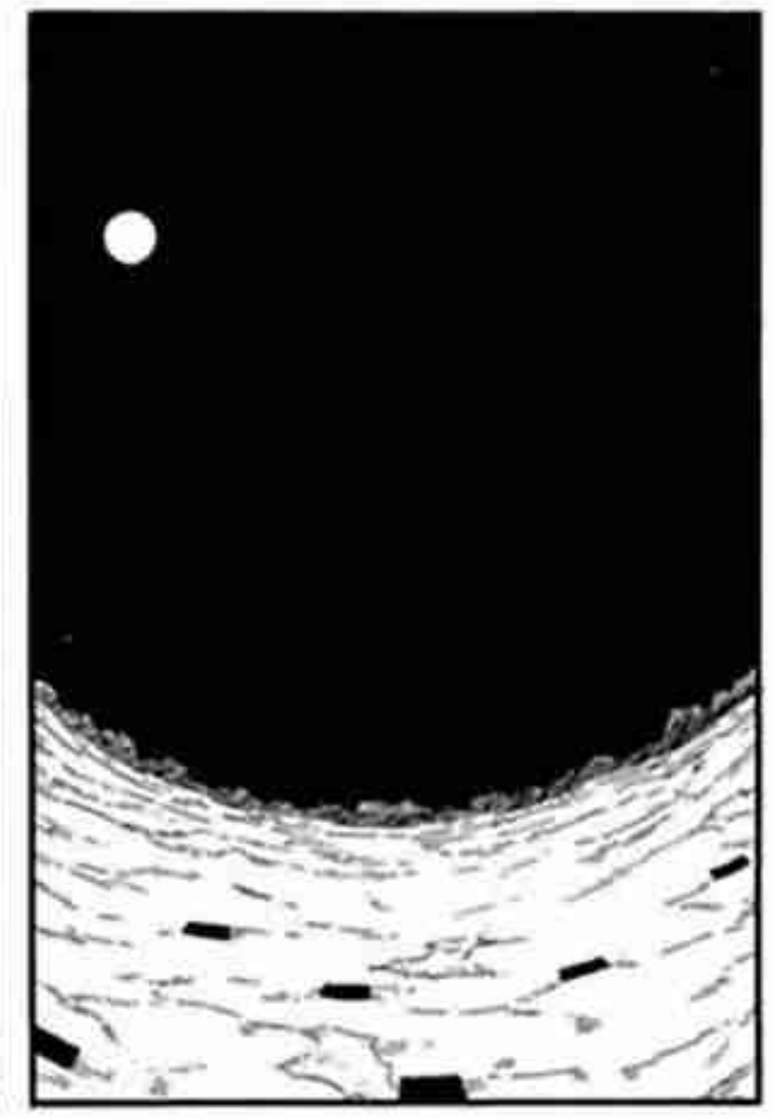
SASUKE'S DOWN TOO... SO WHAT NEXT?
SASUKE WON! UCHIHA ITACHI HAS DIED.
I THINK HE'S IN PRETTY BAD SHAPE.

WHAT DID ITACHI MEAN BY THAT?
WHY DID HE...

I HOPE YOU'RE OK...
I WONDER WHAT YOU'RE DOING RIGHT NOW, SASUKE...

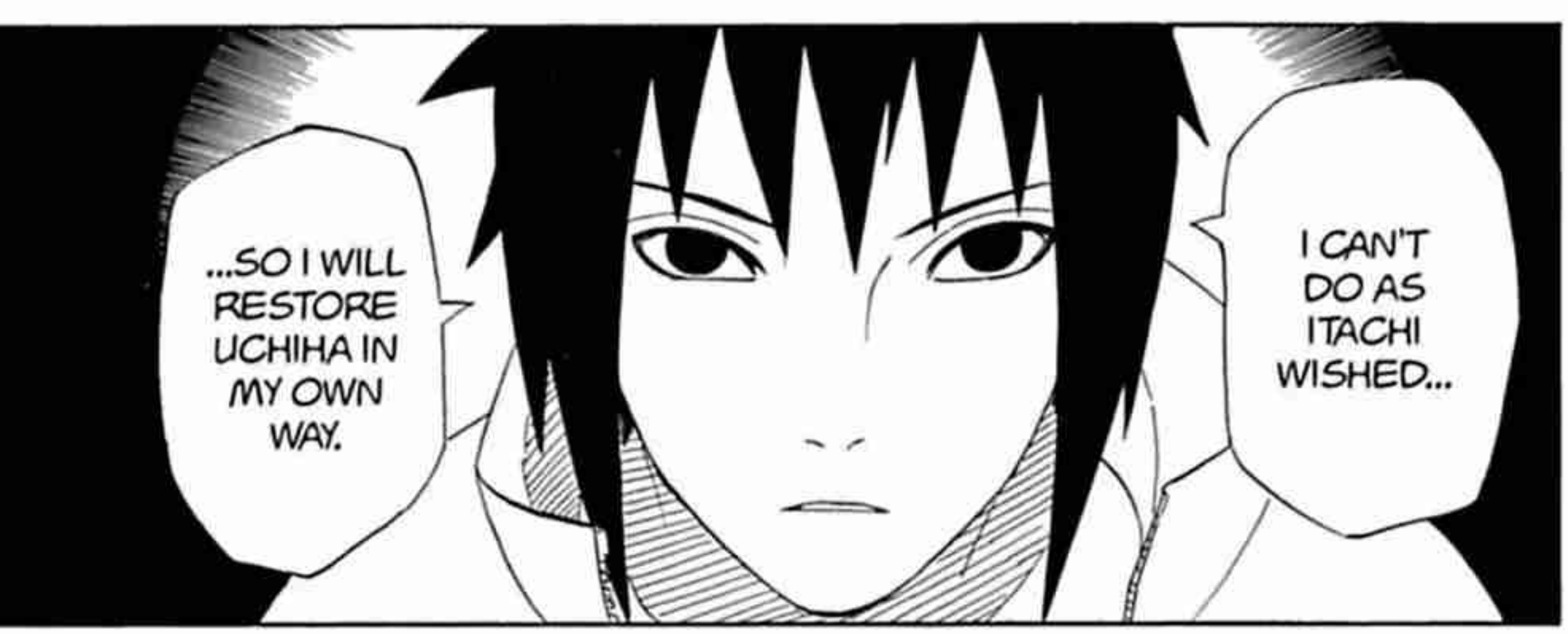
NAH...

YOU GOING TO TRANS-PLANT THEM?
SO WHAT ABOUT ITACHI'S EYES...



WHAT ITACHI WANTED...
AND WHAT I WILL BE DOING ARE TWO COMPLETELY DIFFERENT THINGS.

...


...SO I WILL RESTORE UCHIHA IN MY OWN WAY.
I CAN'T DO AS ITACHI WISHED...

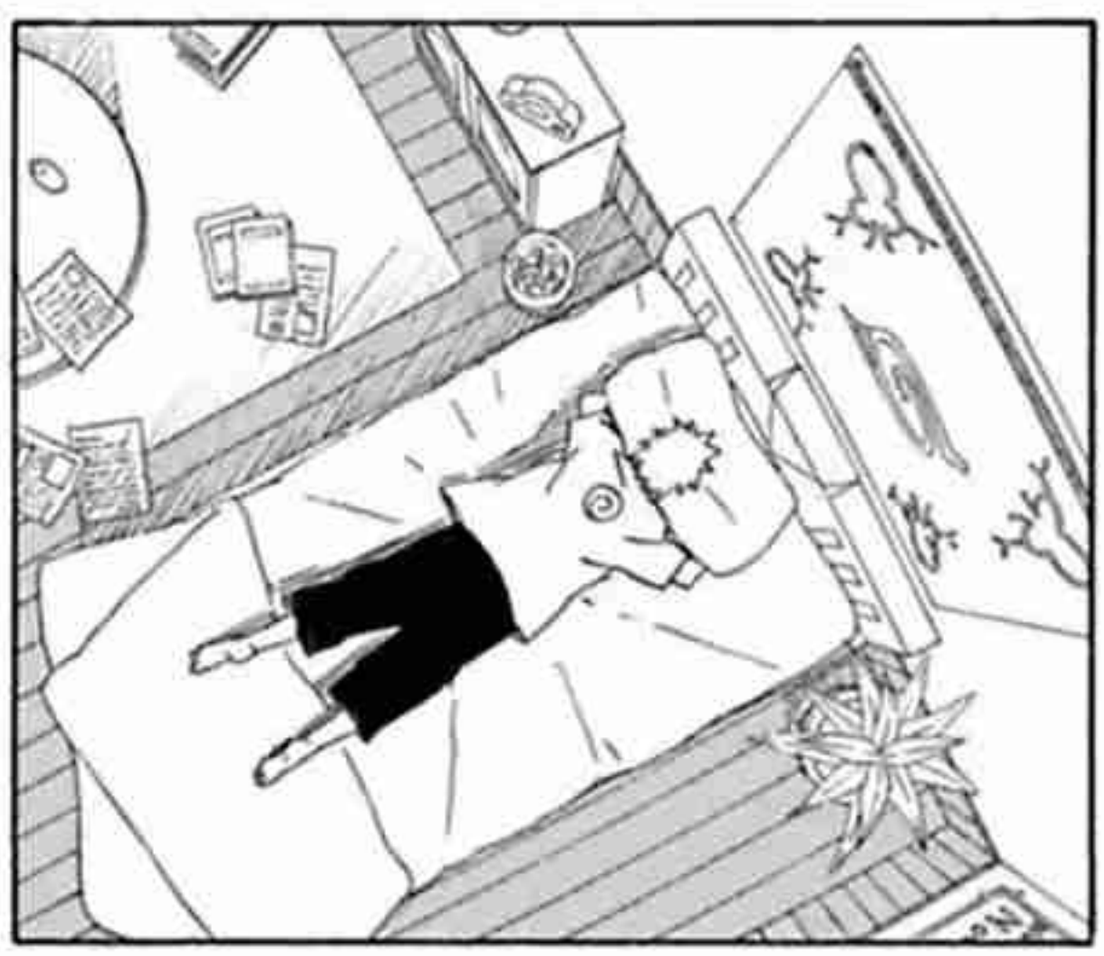
# Number 404: Taka and Akatsuki

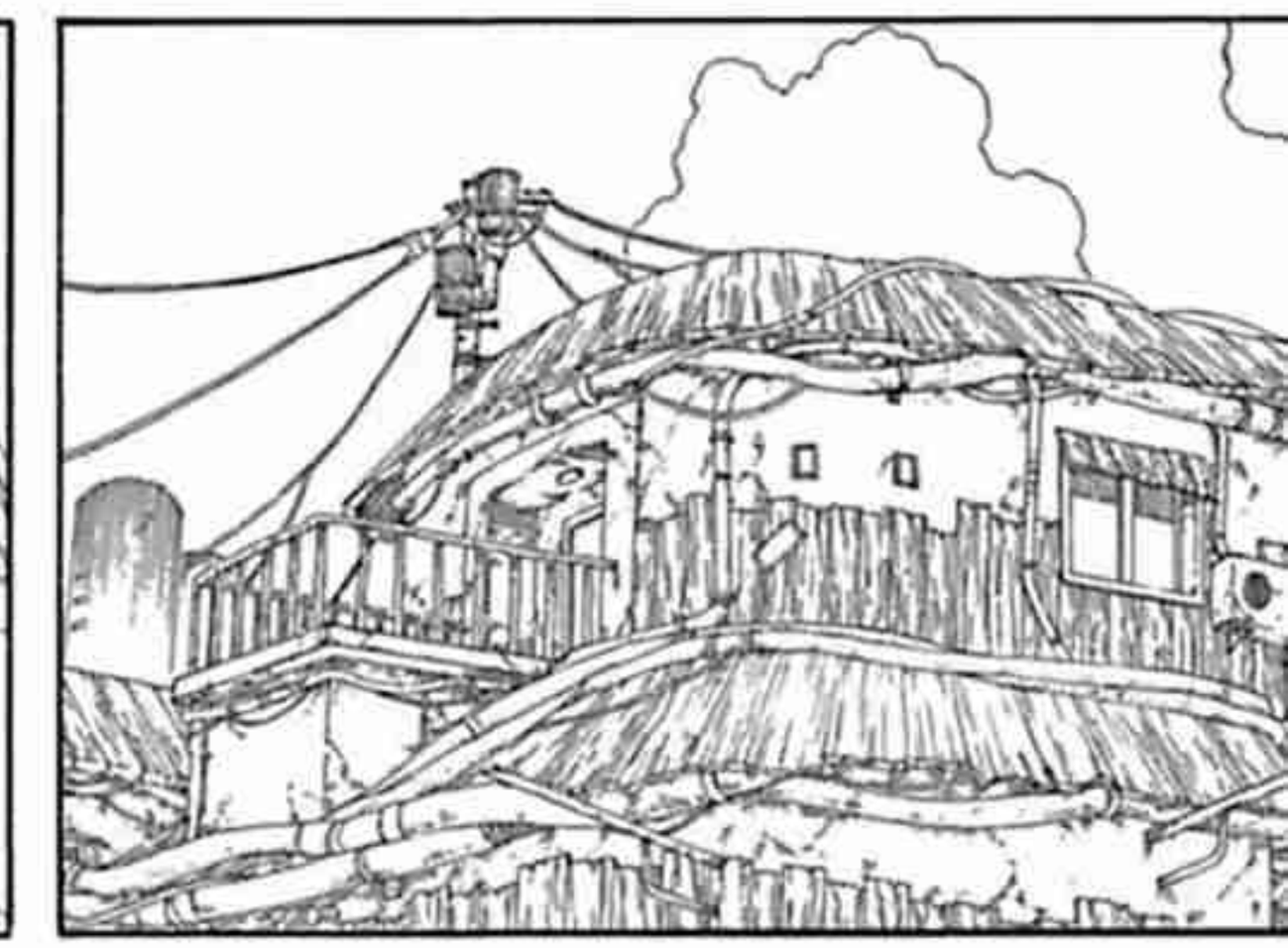
I HAD ABSOLUTELY NO IDEA YOU WERE TOBI, MILORD.

...I SEE.

I SHALL CONTINUE TO COUNT ON YOU, KISAME.

LORD MIZUKAGE EMERITUS... I MEAN MADARA.
NOW I AM RELIEVED... KNOWING THAT IT IS YOU CALLING THE SHOTS MAKES MY JOB EASIER...





READ
THIS
WAY

LADY FIFTH HAS SUMMONED YOU. LET'S GO.
OH...HEY, MASTER KAKASHI...

NOK NOK
!

YO! NARUTO ...
HUH?
CHIEF TOAD AND GAMAKICHI!

ACTUALLY ...

JUST LET BOSS N' TSUNADE HANDLE IT!

GAMAKICHI! KEEP YOUR TRAP SHUT!

?

SOME-THING HAPPEN?

WHAT ARE YOU GUYS DOING HERE?

...?

JUST HURRY UP.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

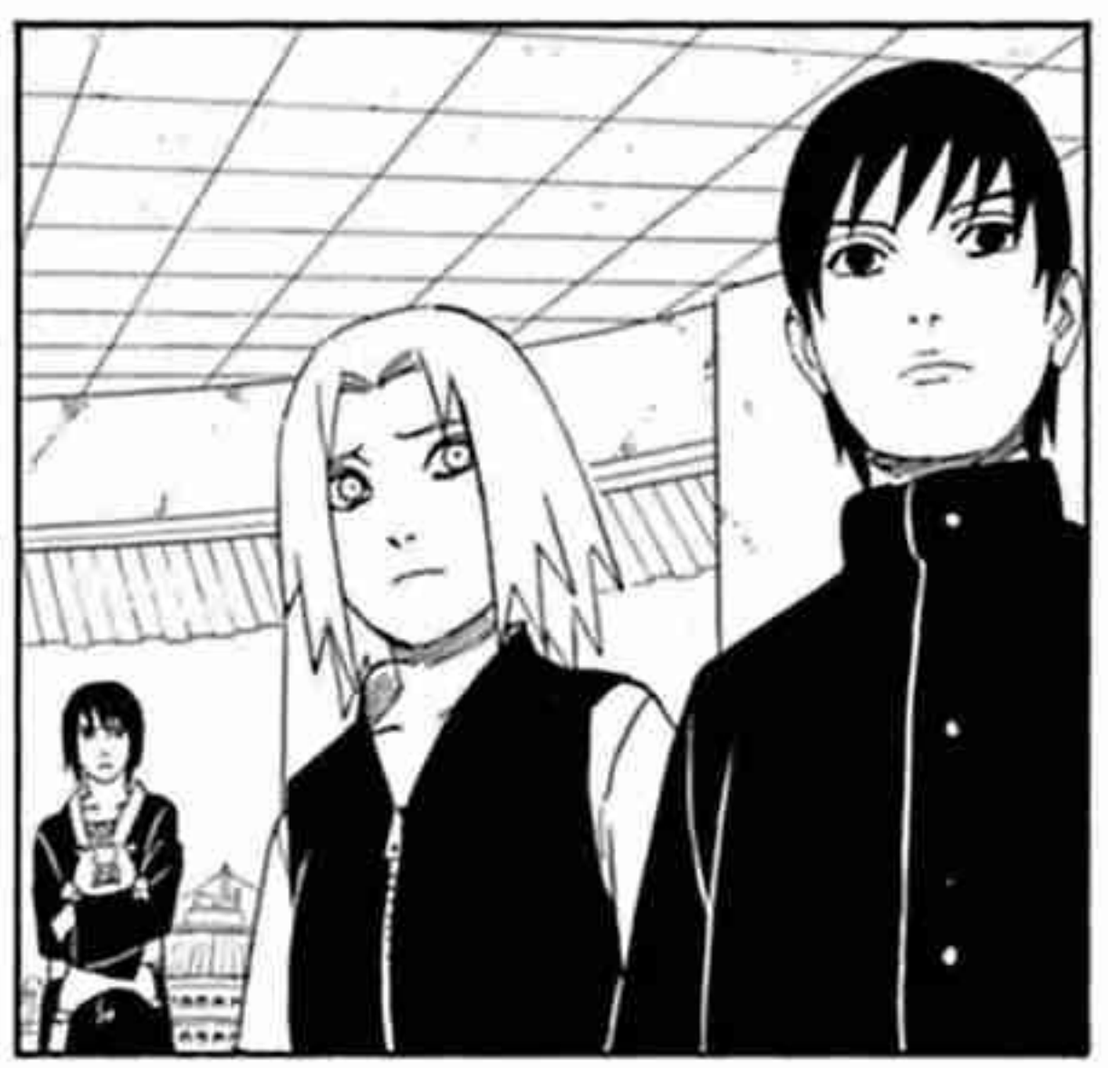
...

READ
THIS
WAY

!

KLUNK

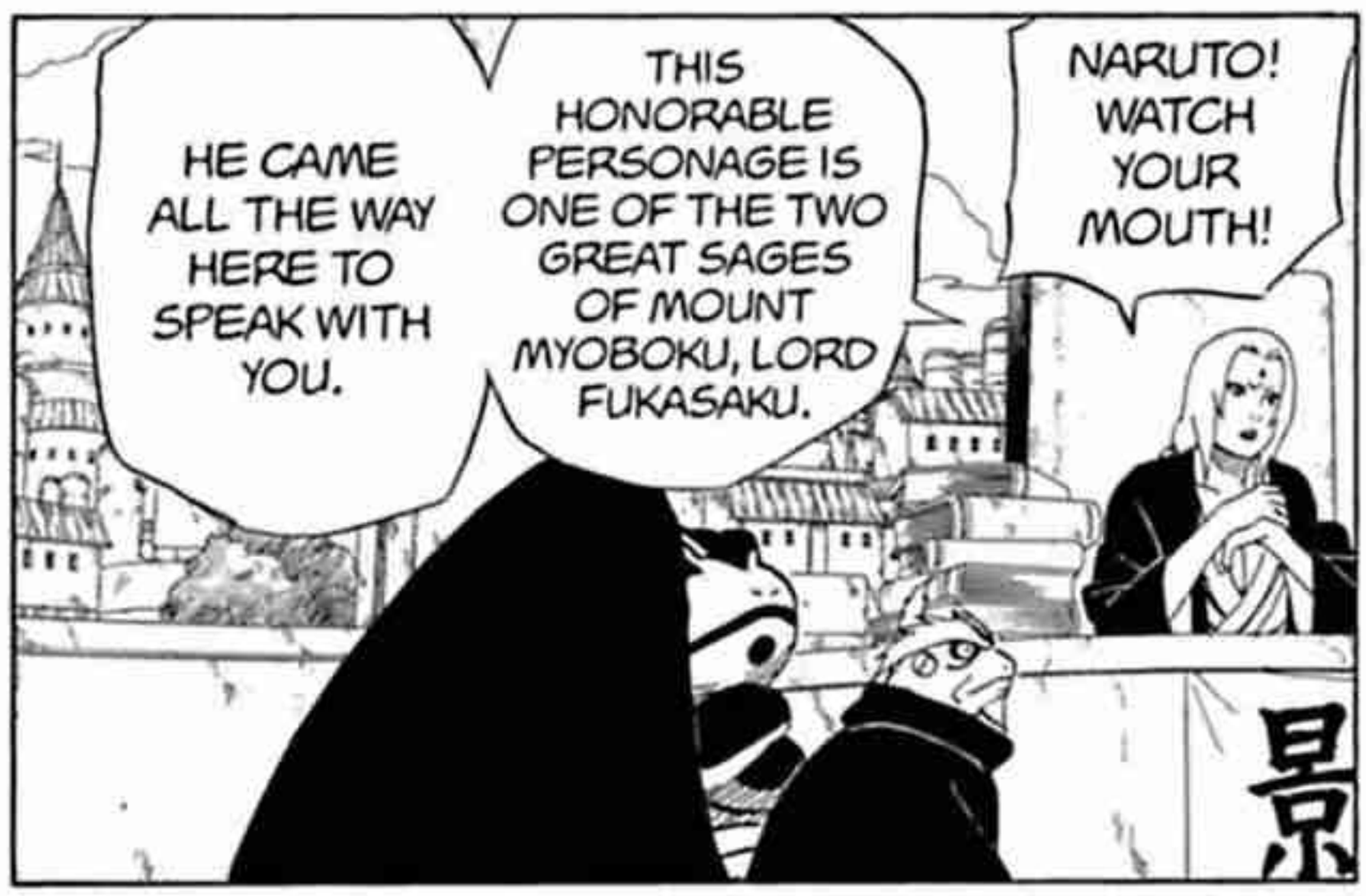
京



...AND THE PROBABLE CHILD OF PROPHECY.
YES... THIS IS UZUMAKI NARUTO ...

...

SO THIS CHILD IS JIRAIYA-BOY'S DISCIPLE?

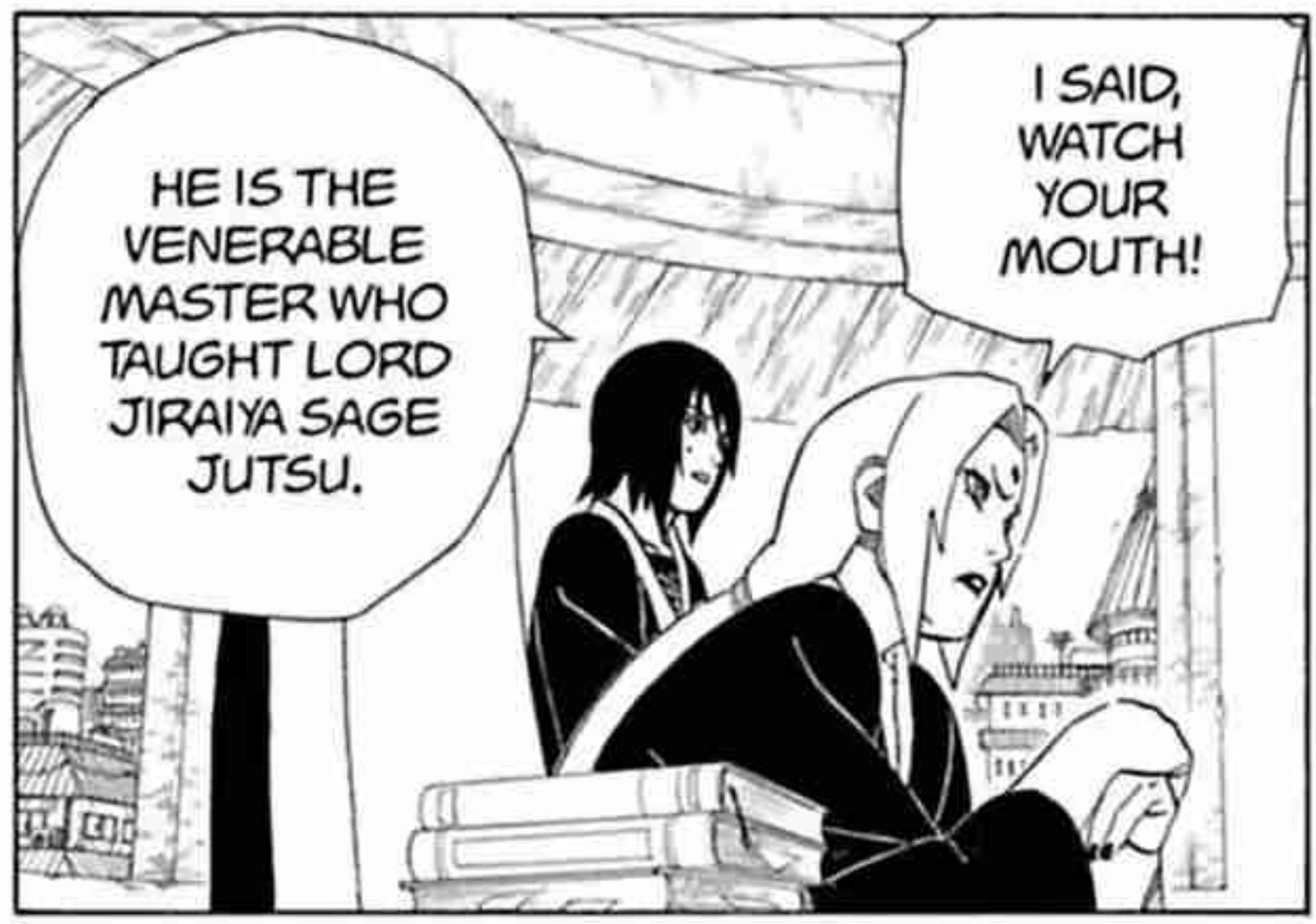

HE CAME ALL THE WAY HERE TO SPEAK WITH YOU.
THIS HONORABLE PERSONAGE IS ONE OF THE TWO GREAT SAGES OF MOUNT MYOBOKU, LORD FUKASAKU.
NARUTO! WATCH YOUR MOUTH!

A GEEZER FROG?
WHAT...?

...BUT NEVER MIND THAT. SO YA REALLY ARE JIRAIYA-BOY'S DISCIPLE?
WELL, TO BE MORE ACCURATE, I AM A GREAT SAGE TOAD.

HOW DARE YOU TREAT PERVY SAGE LIKE A KID!
WHO DOES THIS GEEZER FROG THINK HE IS?!!
JIRAIYA-BOY...?
BOY?!

!

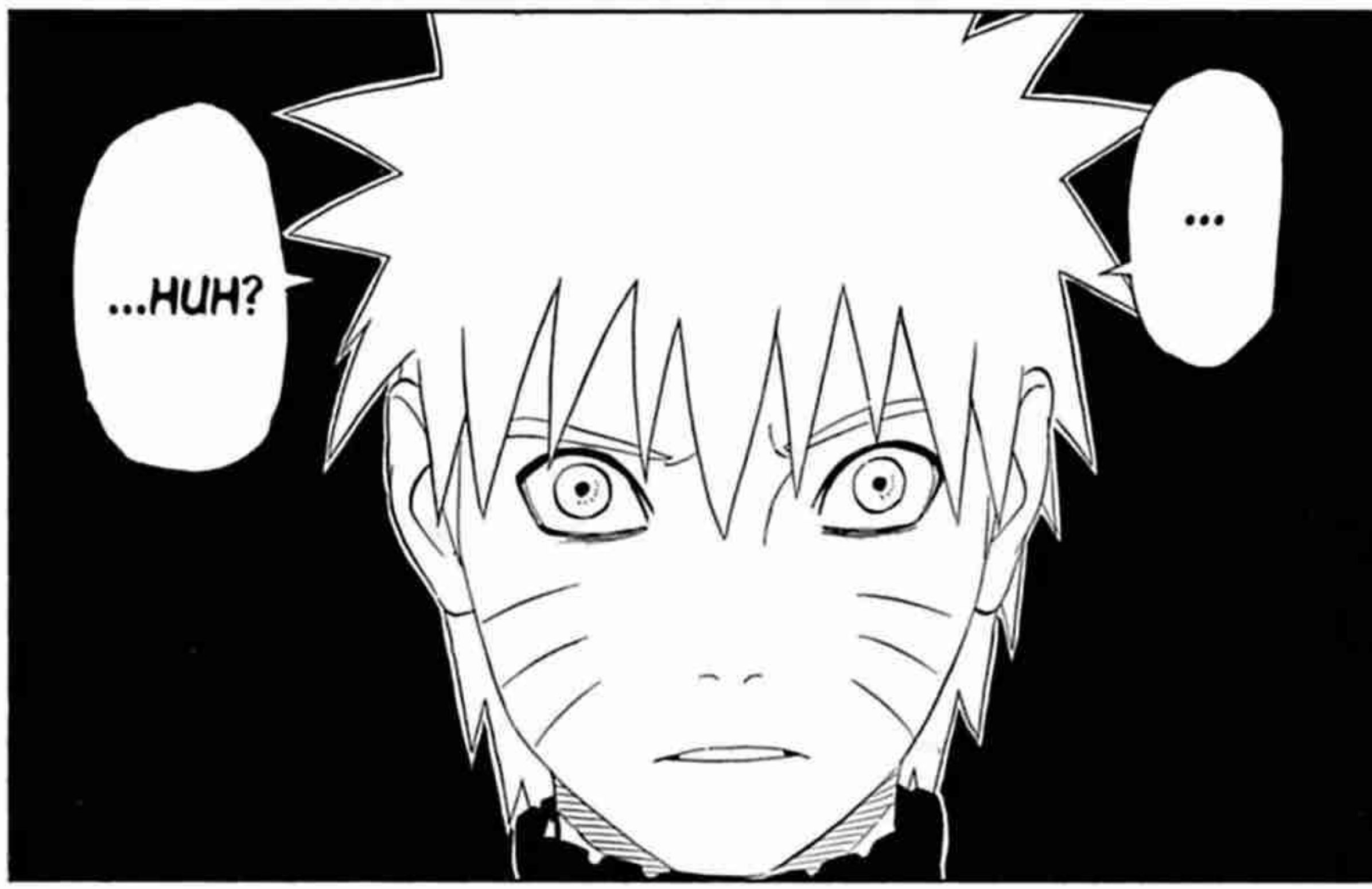

HE IS THE VENERABLE MASTER WHO TAUGHT LORD JIRAIYA SAGE JUTSU.
I SAID, WATCH YOUR MOUTH!

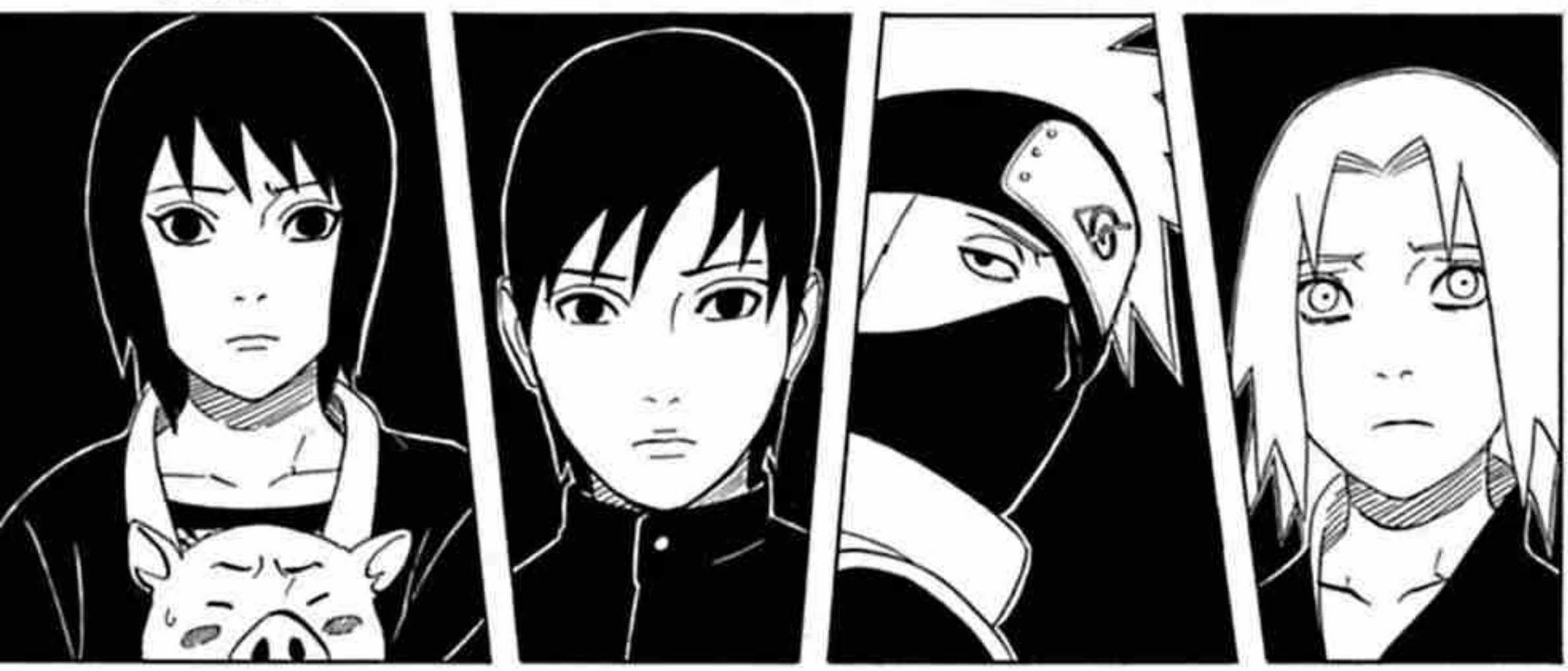
...BUT I SUPPOSE THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS...
I'M NOT SURE WHERE TO BEGIN ...

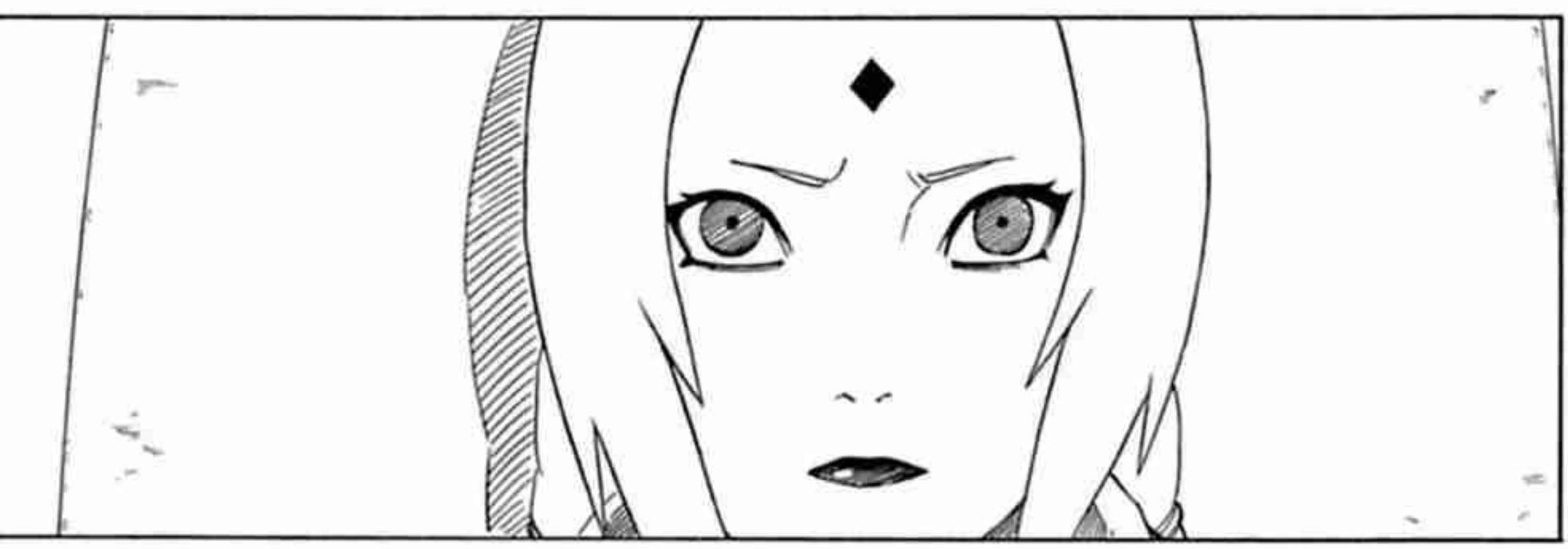
SO WHAT DOES THAT GEEZER SAGE WANT WITH ME, ANYWAY?

WHAT A FITTIN' NICKNAME FOR JIRAIYA-BOY.
HO HO HO... PERVY SAGE, EH...

JIRAIYA-BOY HAS DIED IN BATTLE.

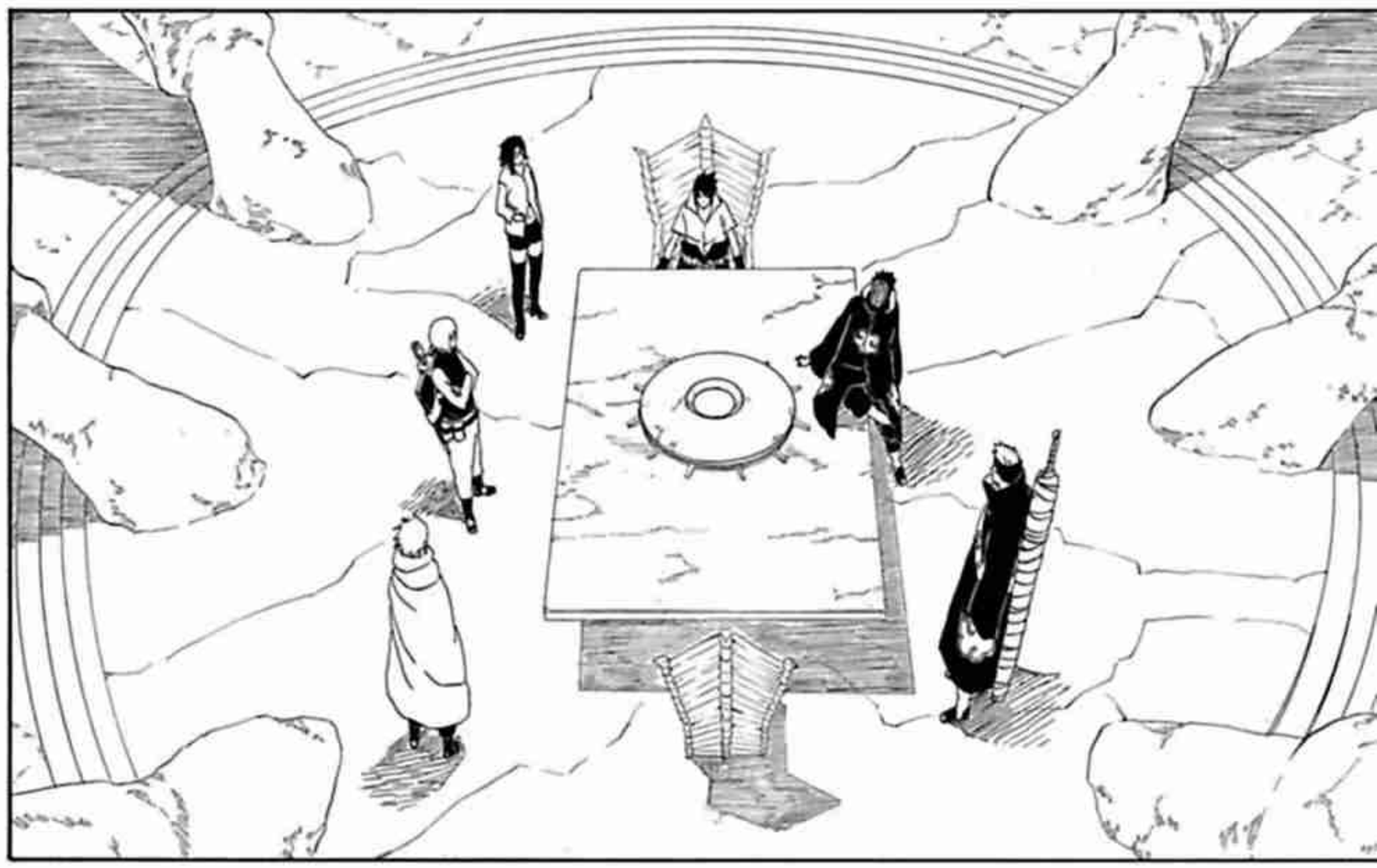

...HUH?
...

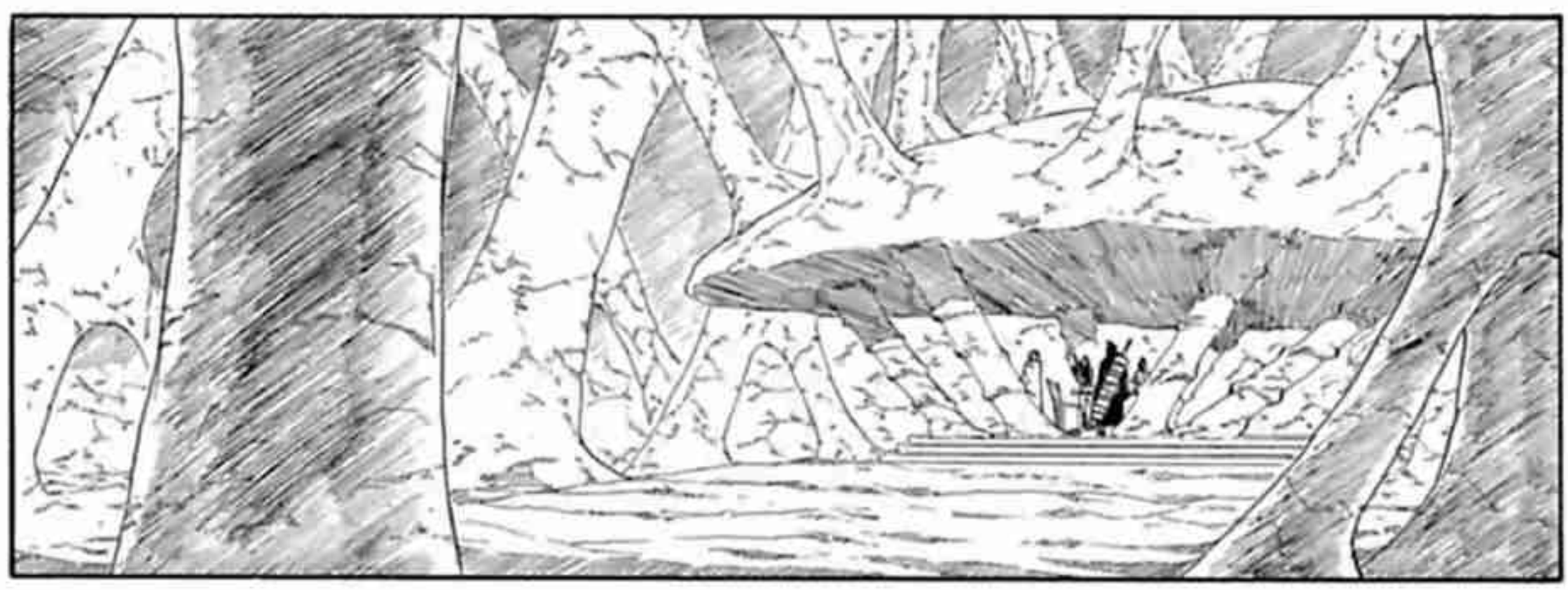




WHA-WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT...

THUMP





READ THIS WAY
IF YOU AIM HIGH, THE ONES BELOW WILL SHIELD THEM.
IT'S NOT GOING TO BE EASY...
...AND YOU FOUR TAKA AREN'T STRONG ENOUGH ALONE.
YOU SAID YOU WANT TO DESTROY KONOHA. BUT HOW? WHAT'S YOUR PLAN?
...THE OTHERS I BASICALLY DON'T CARE ABOUT EITHER WAY.
THE ELDERS MUST DIE...
WE HAVEN'T SETTLED THAT GAME WE STARTED THE OTHER DAY... SO LET ME SHOW YOU MY REAL...
STOP IT, SUIGETSU.
MASTER KISAME...YOU SHOULDN'T UNDER-ESTIMATE US.
TAK
HEH...

ZERO
DOM
SASUKE, YOU LACK CONTROL.
!..
TH
ZZ

I'VE BEEN HANGING WITH SASUKE ONLY SO I COULD GET NEAR IT.
MY OBJECTIVE IS HIS SAME-HADA!
SUIGETSU, ARE YOU STUPID?!
THIS ISN'T...
HE STOPPED ME WITH JUST HIS ARM...

HO HO... YET, EH...
VIWEET

BUT KNOW THAT YOU CAN'T WIN AGAINST HIM YET.
FINE...
DO AS YOU WILL, SUIGETSU.

SASUKE... WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO?

KLAK
THEN AGAIN, THE AKATSUKI'S LOW IN MAN-POWER RIGHT NOW TOO.

WELL, NO WORRIES. I'LL GET YOU SOME YUMMY SHARK'S FIN SOON ENOUGH.
HEH... WHAT A DIS, SASUKE.

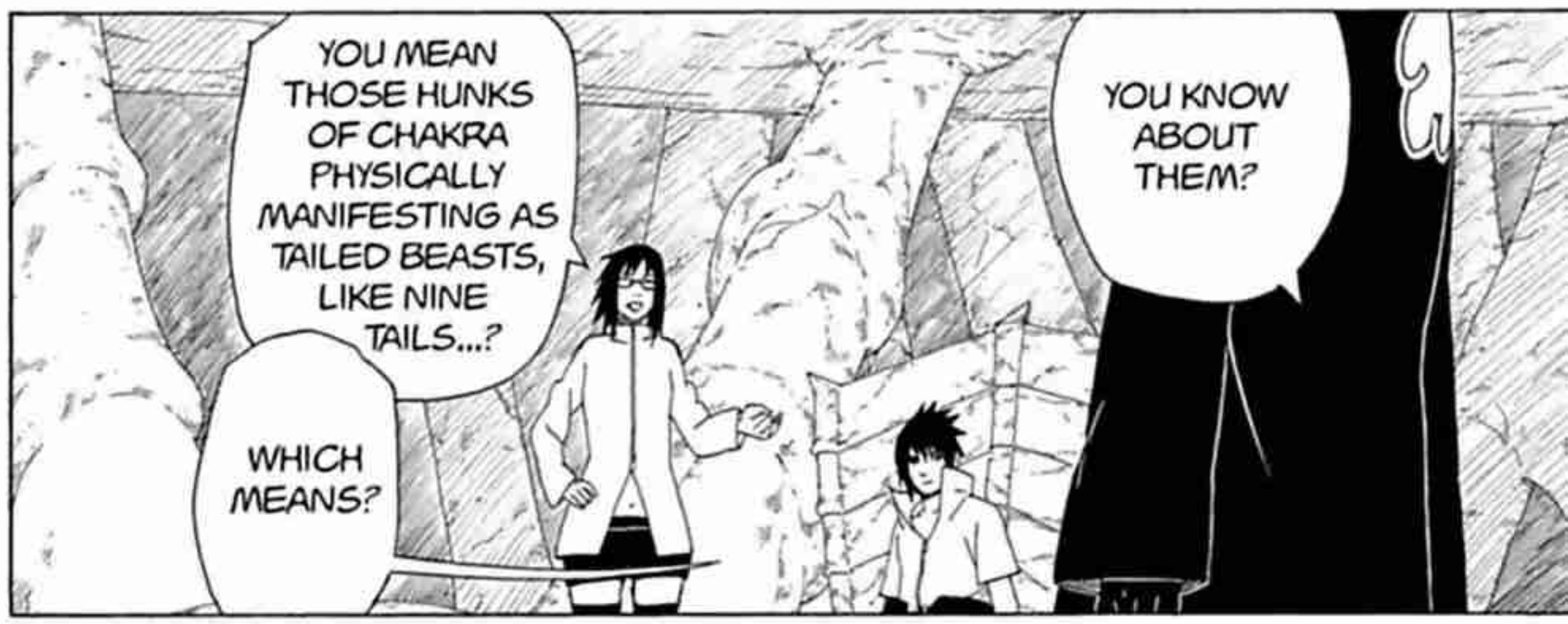
SO... TAKA SHALL COORDINATE AND MOVE WITH AKATSUKI.
WE SHARE COMMON INTERESTS.

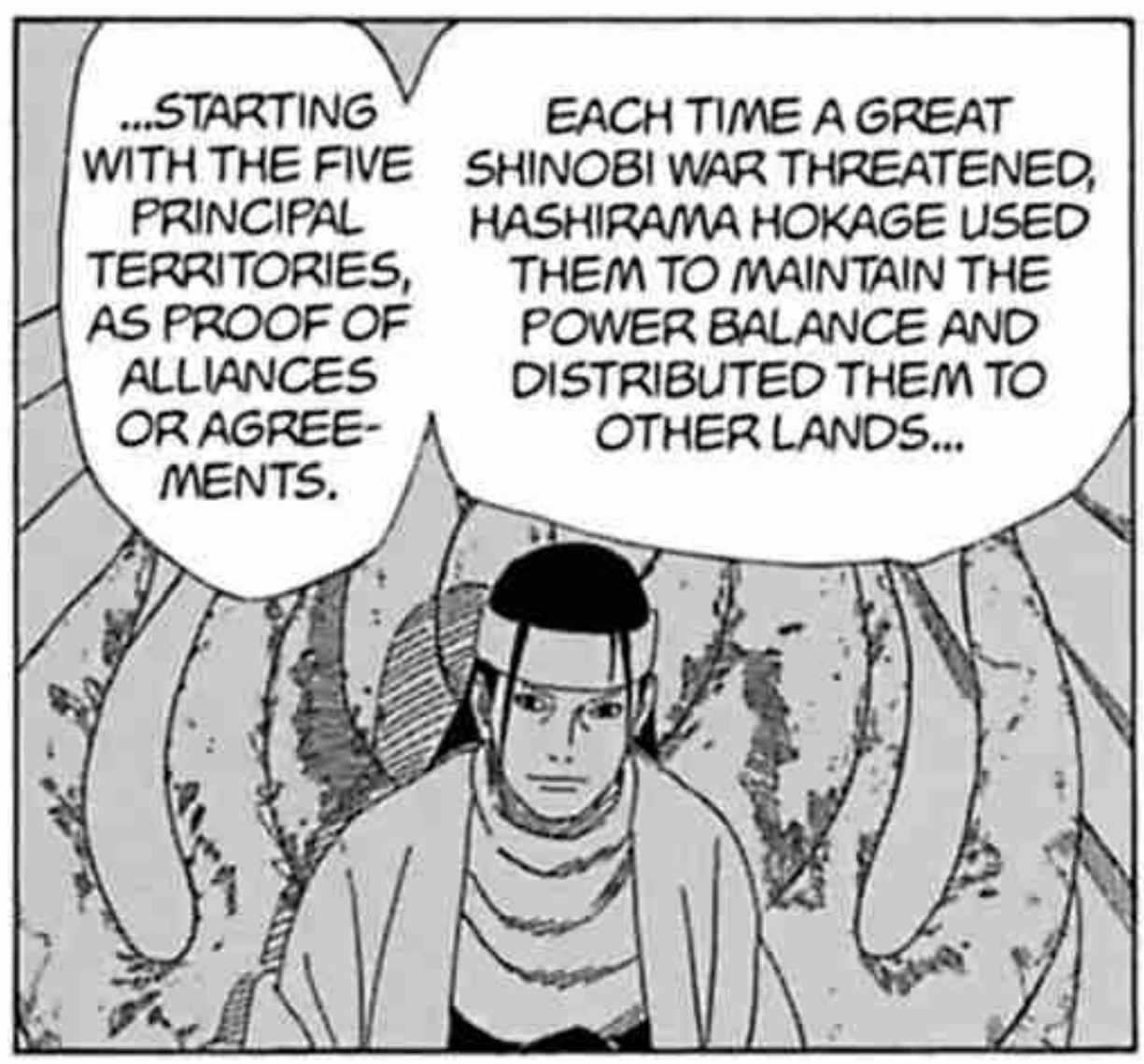
THE POT SHOULDN'T BE CALLING THE KETTLE BLACK, YOU KNOW.

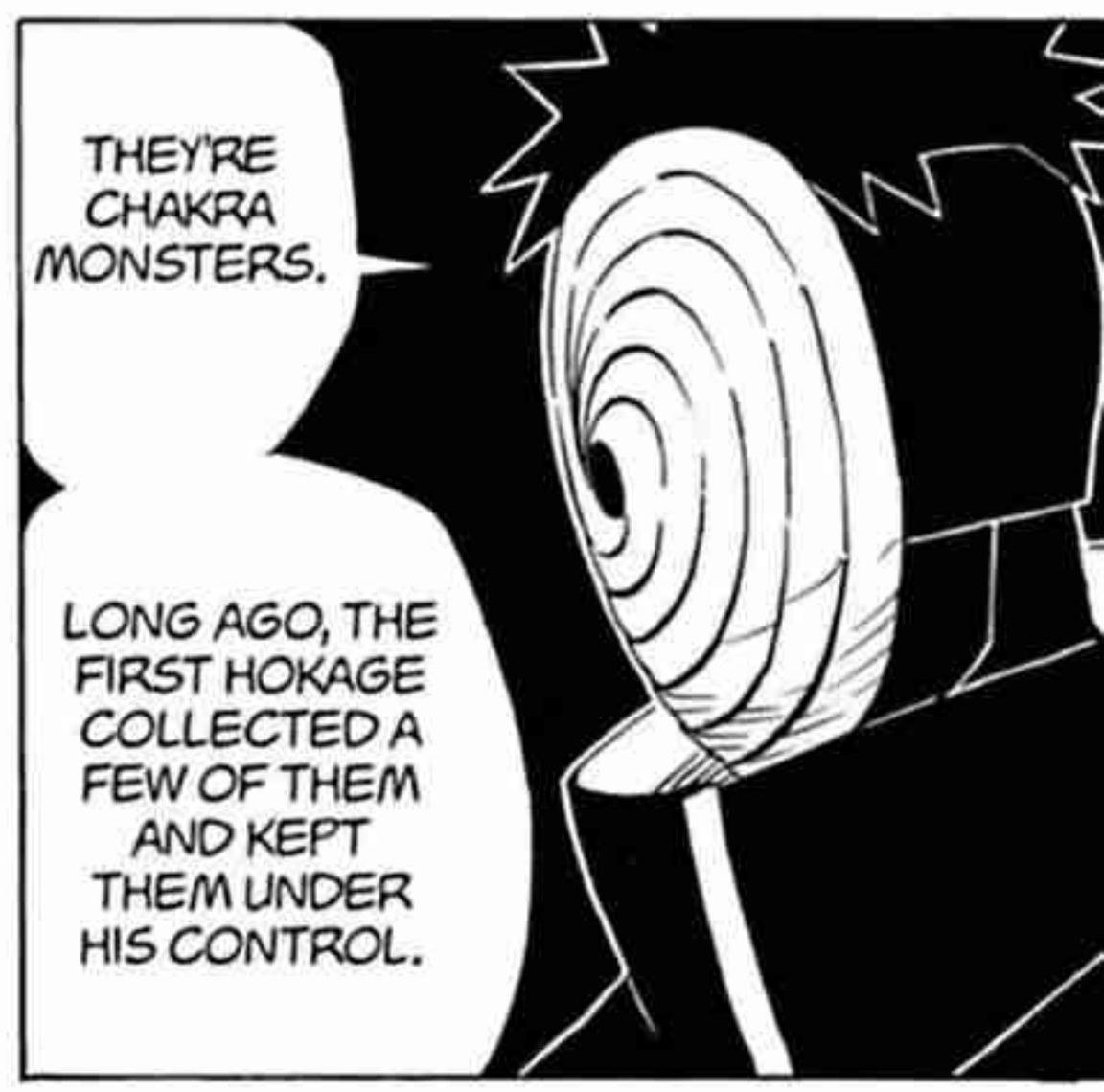
BIJU?

WE'LL SHARE THE BIJU WITH YOU.

AND WHAT'S IN IT FOR US?


YOU MEAN THOSE HUNKS OF CHAKRA PHYSICALLY MANIFESTING AS TAILED BEASTS, LIKE NINE TAILS...?
WHICH MEANS?
YOU KNOW ABOUT THEM?


...STARTING WITH THE FIVE PRINCIPAL TERRITORIES, AS PROOF OF ALLIANCES OR AGREE-MENTS.
EACH TIME A GREAT SHINOBI WAR THREATENED, HASHIRAMA HOKAGE USED THEM TO MAINTAIN THE POWER BALANCE AND DISTRIBUTED THEM TO OTHER LANDS...


THEY'RE CHAKRA MONSTERS.
LONG AGO, THE FIRST HOKAGE COLLECTED A FEW OF THEM AND KEPT THEM UNDER HIS CONTROL.

READ
THIS
WAY

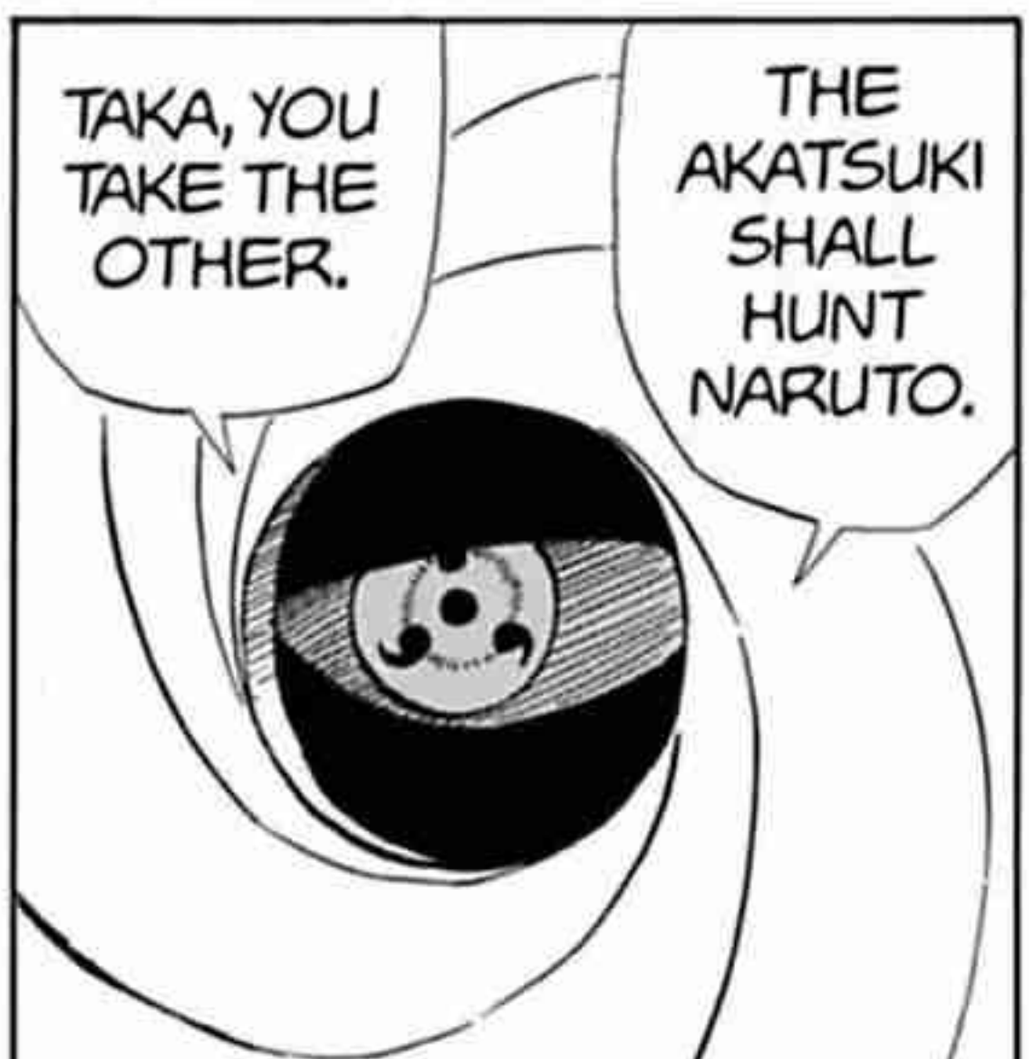
HOWEVER, IF YOU BETRAY THE AKATSUKI, YOU'LL HAVE TO DIE.
THAT'S QUITE GENER-OUS.

...IT'S NOT A BAD PROPOSITION.
YOU COULD CALL THEM THE ULTIMATE CHAKRA WEAPONS...
HUFF...

...THAT'LL BE OUR IMMEDIATE GOAL.
WE'LL SPLIT THEM BETWEEN US...

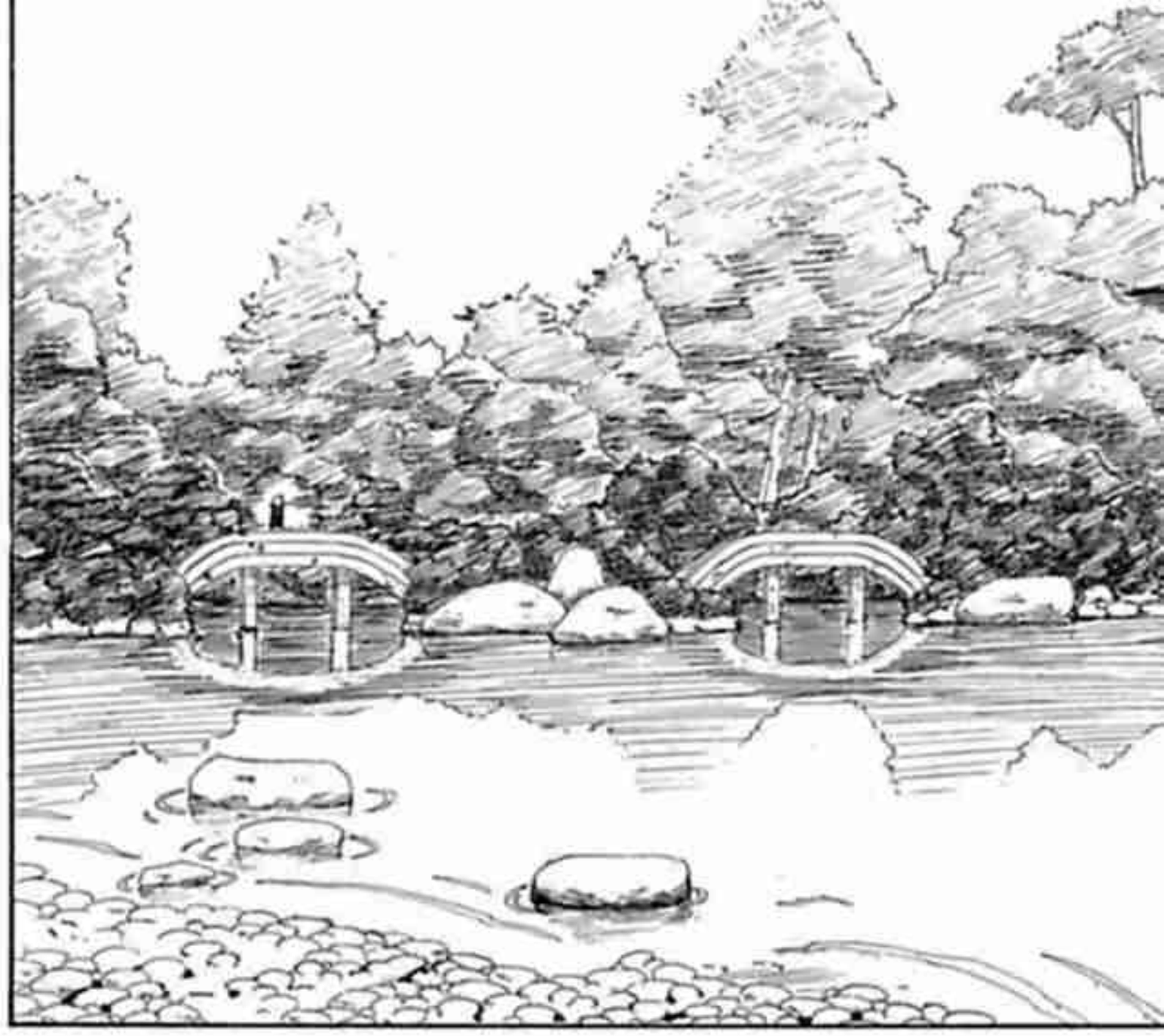
SO FAR WE AKATSUKI HAVE COLLECTED SEVEN OF THEM...
...THERE ARE NINE BIJU IN TOTAL.
...JUST TWO REMAIN.

HEH...

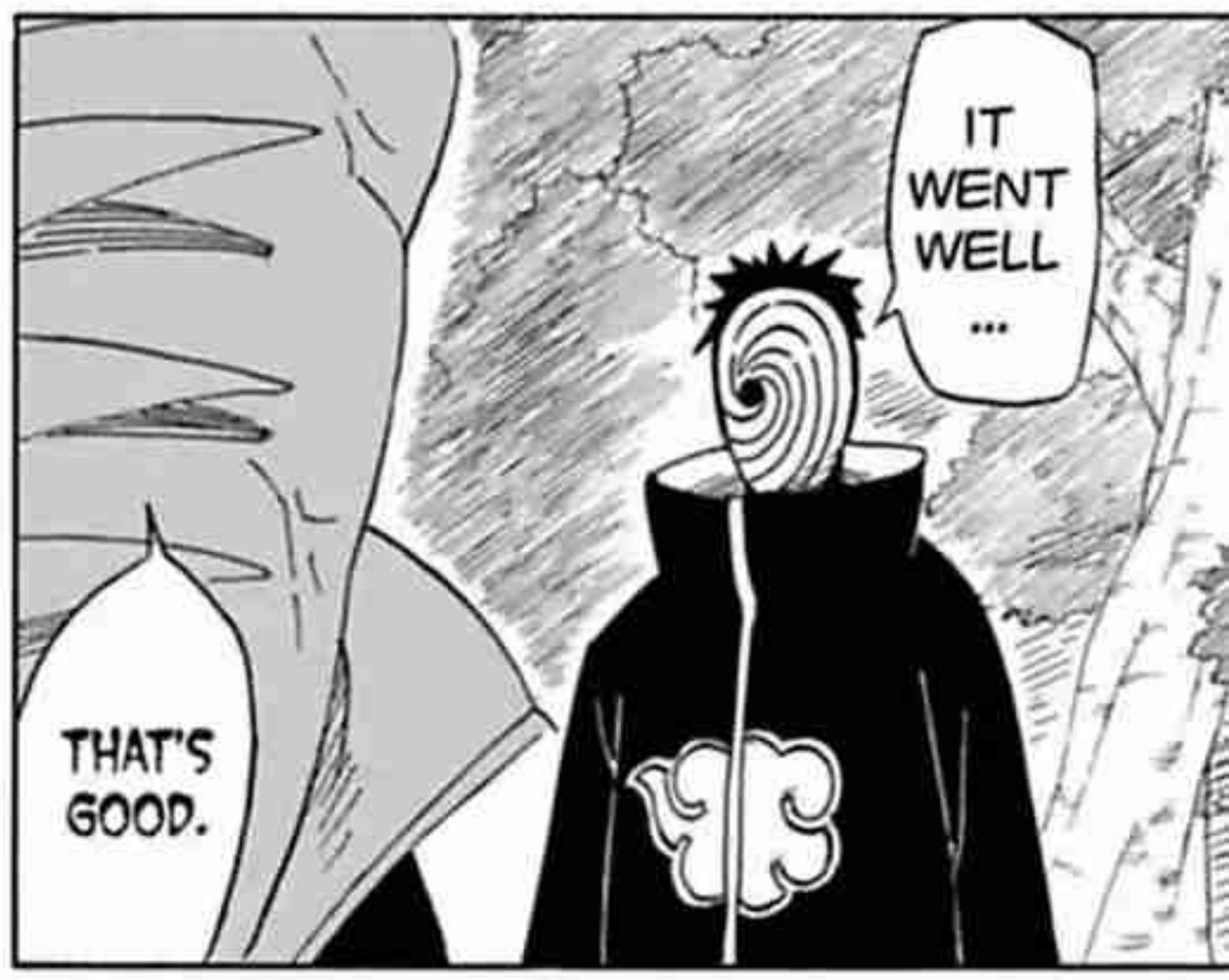

TAKA, YOU TAKE THE OTHER.
THE AKATSUKI SHALL HUNT NARUTO.

...YOU DON'T HAVE NINE TAILS YET, HUH.

WELL?



AND NOW WE NEED NO LONGER KEEP OUR PACT TO STAY AWAY FROM KONOHA.
ITACHI'S DEAD... SO OUR EYESORE'S FINALLY GONE.


IT WENT WELL ...
THAT'S GOOD.

BUT ITACHI HAD PLACED INSURANCE IN SASUKE.
THE AMATER-ASU.

SUCH A LONG WAIT...
ALL SO WE COULD PROCEED ACCORDING TO PLAN... IT WAS WORTH THE WAIT.

TRUE INTENTIONS ASIDE, HE PROBABLY FEARED I WOULD TRY TO RECRUIT SASUKE.

YOU DON'T THINK ITACHI WAS AWARE THAT WE KNEW HIS TRUE INTENTIONS, DO YOU? SO WHY...?

DEIDARA, SASORI, HIDAN, KAKUZU...

...WITHOUT THEM, WE WOULDN'T HAVE GOTTEN AS FAR AS WE HAVE.

WELL, WE RAN INTO PROBLEMS HERE AND THERE...

...BUT THEY ALL SERVED THE AKATSUKI BY THEIR OWN WILL.

STILL... LOSING SO MANY MEMBERS JUST TO GET THIS FAR...

...I HAVE TAMED AND WON OVER SASUKE.

MOST IMPOR-TANTLY...

AND THANKS TO THEM, EVERYTHING IS FOLLOWING MY PLAN.

NARUTO

# Number 405: Inheritance

FRRLLP

THIS IS THAT MESSAGE!

GRNP

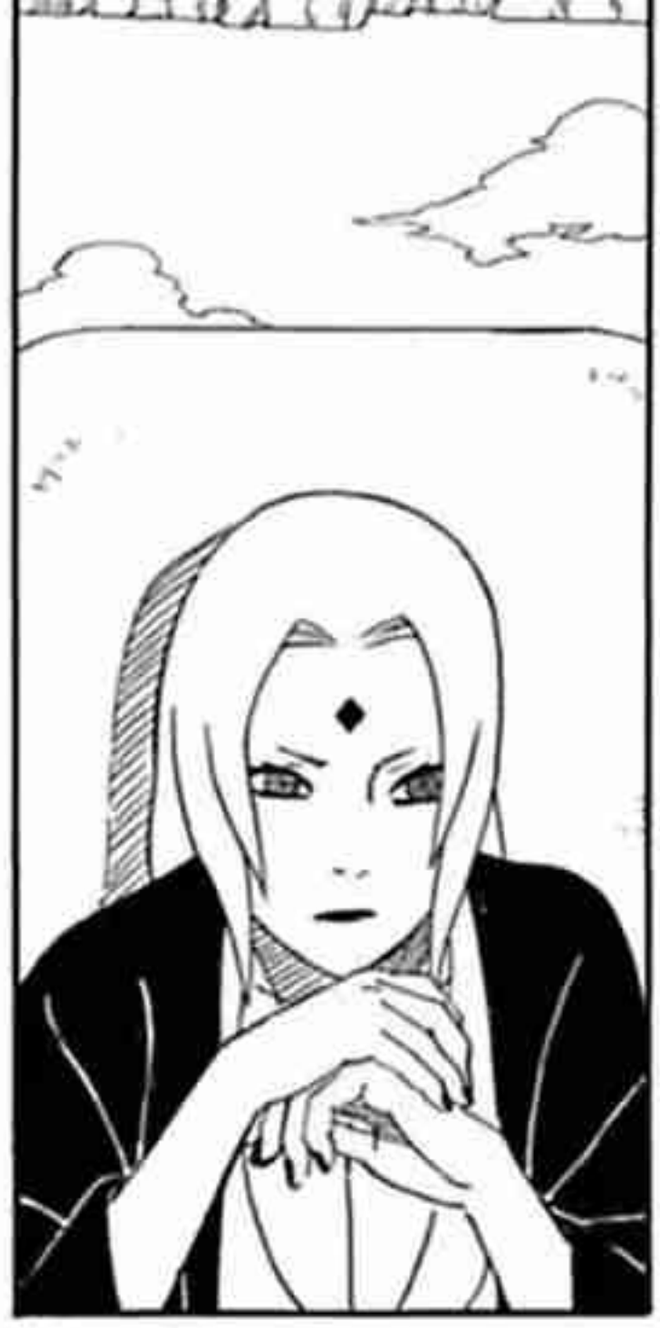
EVEN AFTER HE HAD HIS THROAT CRUSHED BY PAIN...

...JIRAIYA-BOY LEFT A MESSAGE BEFORE COLLAPSIN'.

IT'S A CODE...

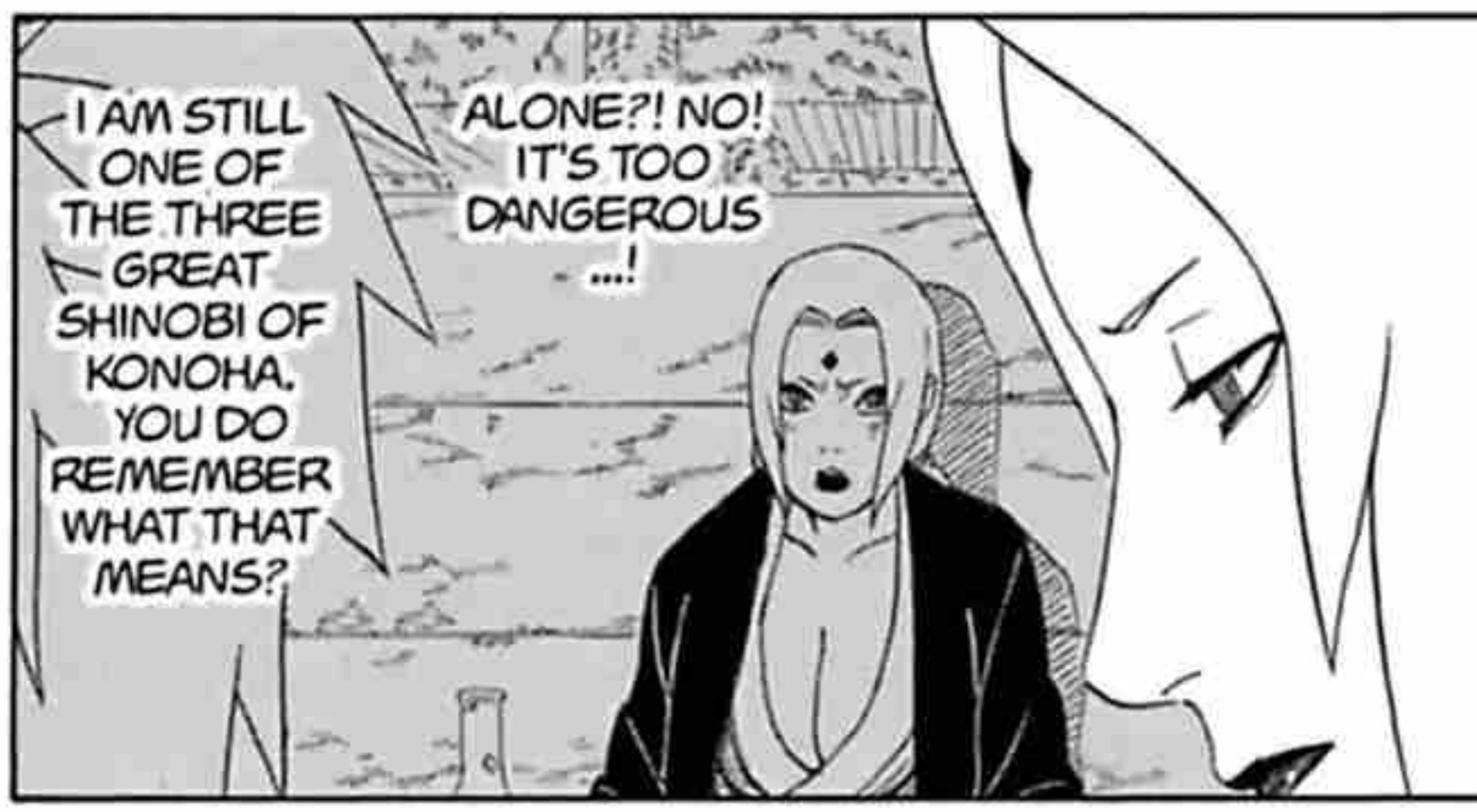
9,31,8
106,7
207,15

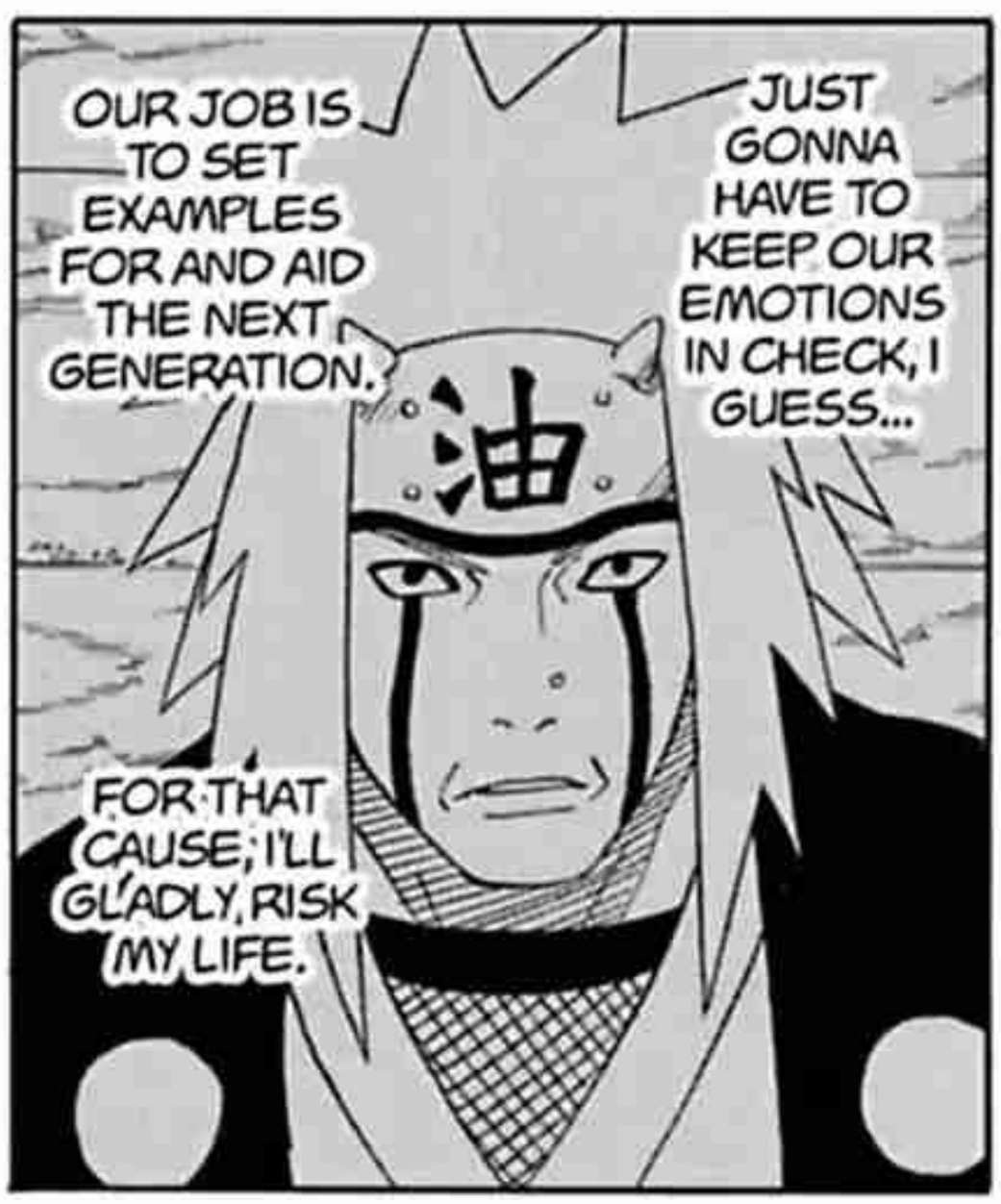
READ THIS WAY
YOU LET HIM GO... GRANNY ...?
...
...AND THAT'S IT FOR JIRAIYA-BOY'S EFFORTS.
I'M SURE IT WERE SO PAIN WOULDN'T CATCH ON.
FRRLLP
...
THAT'S RIGHT.
HOW COULD YOU SEND HIM TO SUCH A DANGEROUS PLACE, ALONE?!
YOU KNOW PERVY SAGE BETTER THAN ANYONE!
STOP IT, NARUTO.
WHY'D YOU LET HIM TAKE THAT RISK?!!

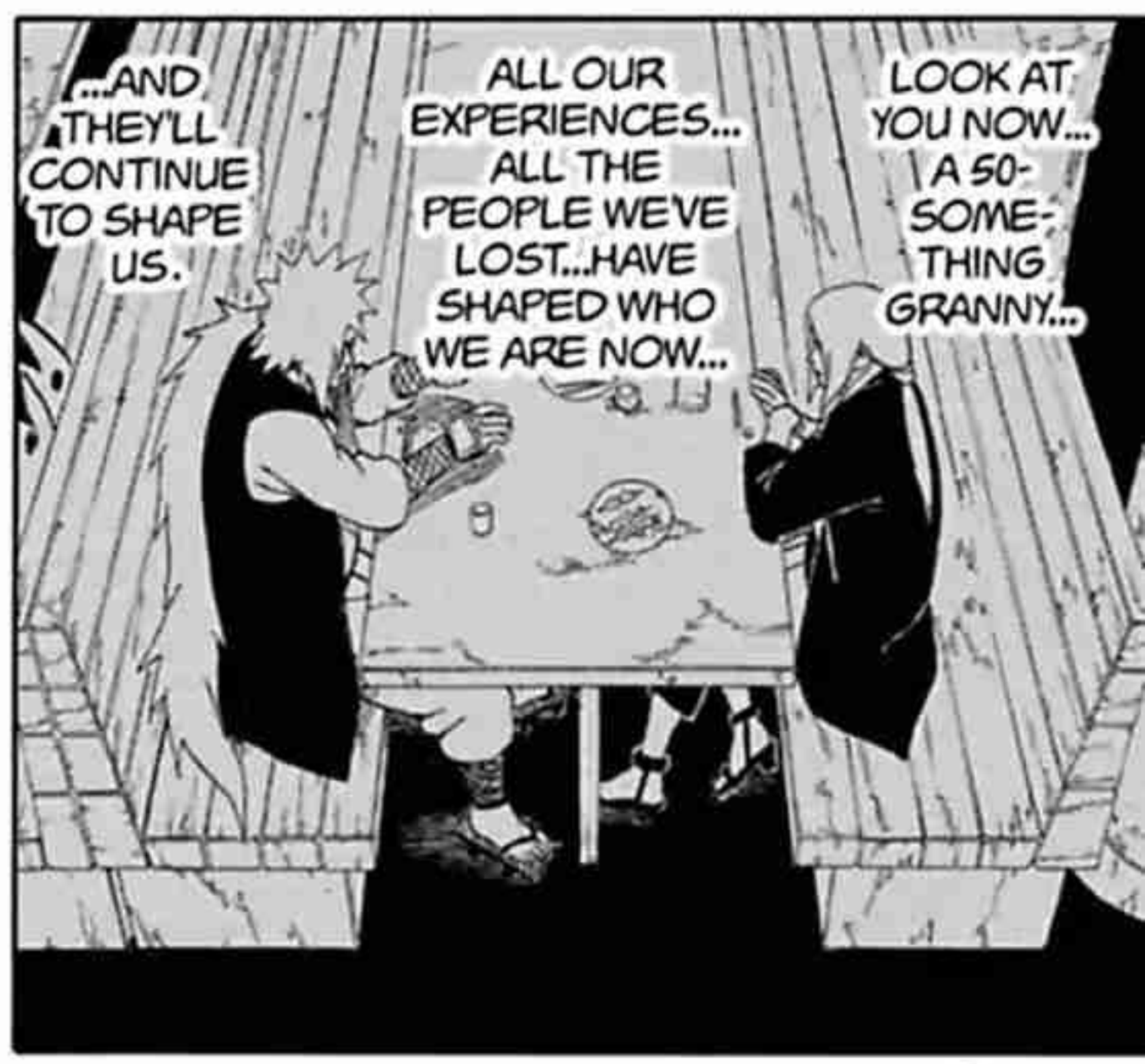


YWEEN
...

YOU OF ALL PEOPLE OUGHT TO KNOW LADY FIFTH'S FEELINGS.


I AM STILL ONE OF THE THREE GREAT SHINOBI OF KONOHA. YOU DO REMEMBER WHAT THAT MEANS?
ALONE?! NO! IT'S TOO DANGEROUS ...!


OUR JOB IS TO SET EXAMPLES FOR AND AID THE NEXT GENERATION.
JUST GONNA HAVE TO KEEP OUR EMOTIONS IN CHECK, I GUESS...
FOR THAT CAUSE, I'LL GLADLY RISK MY LIFE.


...AND THEY'LL CONTINUE TO SHAPE US.
ALL OUR EXPERIENCES... ALL THE PEOPLE WE'VE LOST...HAVE SHAPED WHO WE ARE NOW...
LOOK AT YOU NOW... A 50-SOME-THING GRANNY...

READ THIS WAY
...GAH!
!
....HE WOULDN'T HAVE LET GRANNY TSUNADE TAKE SUCH RISKS... I KNOW IT!
IF PERVY SAGE HAD BEEN FIFTH HOKAGE...
KLAK
NARUTO! WHERE ARE YOU GOING ?!
JUST LET HIM BE.
SAKURA... ENOUGH.
NARUTO!
KATOK

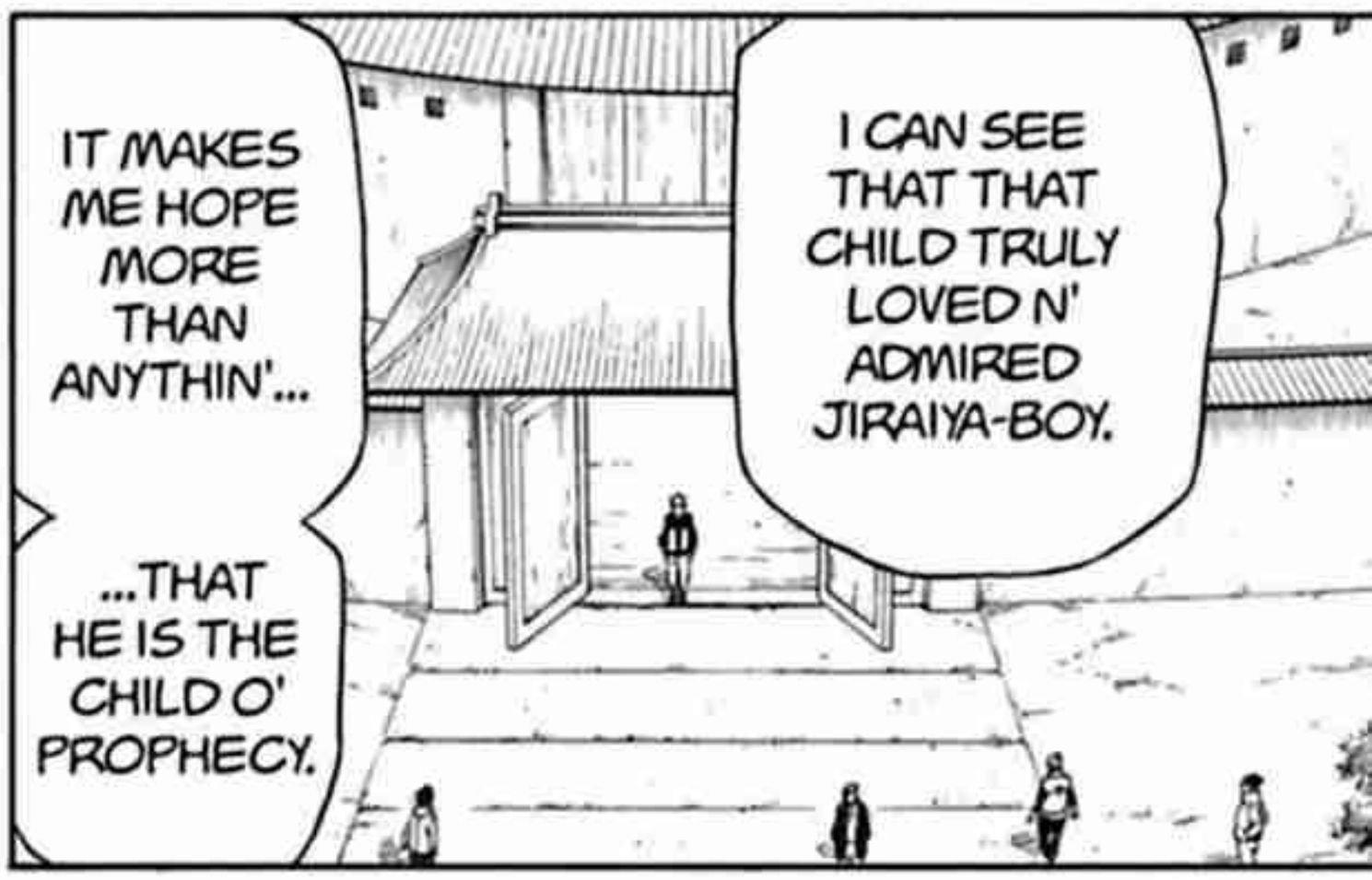
BUT...

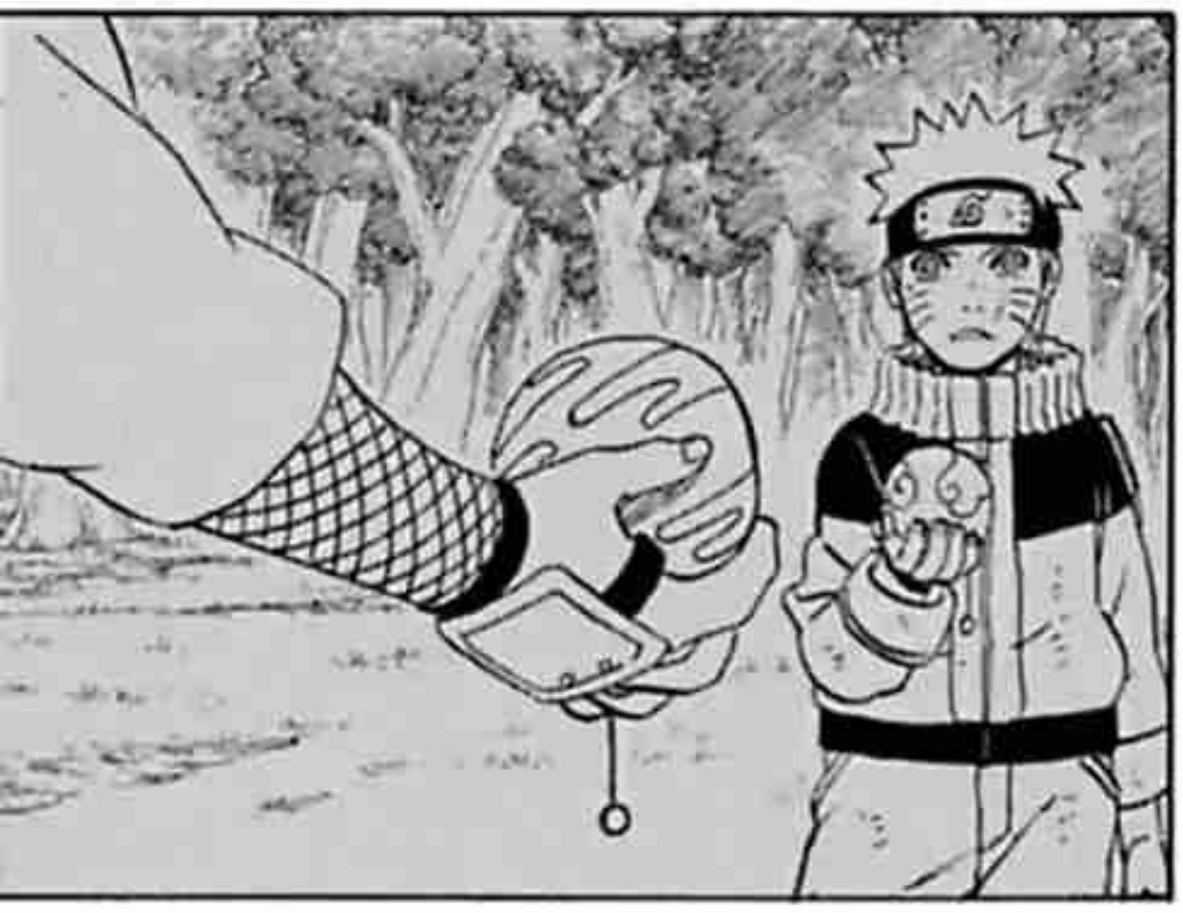
BWHAM

BUT BACK TO THAT CHILD O' PROPHECY VISION I WAS TALKIN' 'BOUT EARLIER...

NO, NO... THAT'S ALL RIGHT.

I'LL ARRANGE FOR NARUTO TO...
MY APOLOGIES, LORD FUKASAKU.


IT MAKES ME HOPE MORE THAN ANYTHIN'...
...THAT HE IS THE CHILD O' PROPHECY.
I CAN SEE THAT THAT CHILD TRULY LOVED N' ADMIRED JIRAIYA-BOY.



忠

油

油

!
YO, NARUTO!

EVERYONE IN THE VILLAGE IS TALKING ABOUT YOU.
I HEAR YOU'VE BEEN REAL ACTIVE ON MISSIONS AND SUCH.

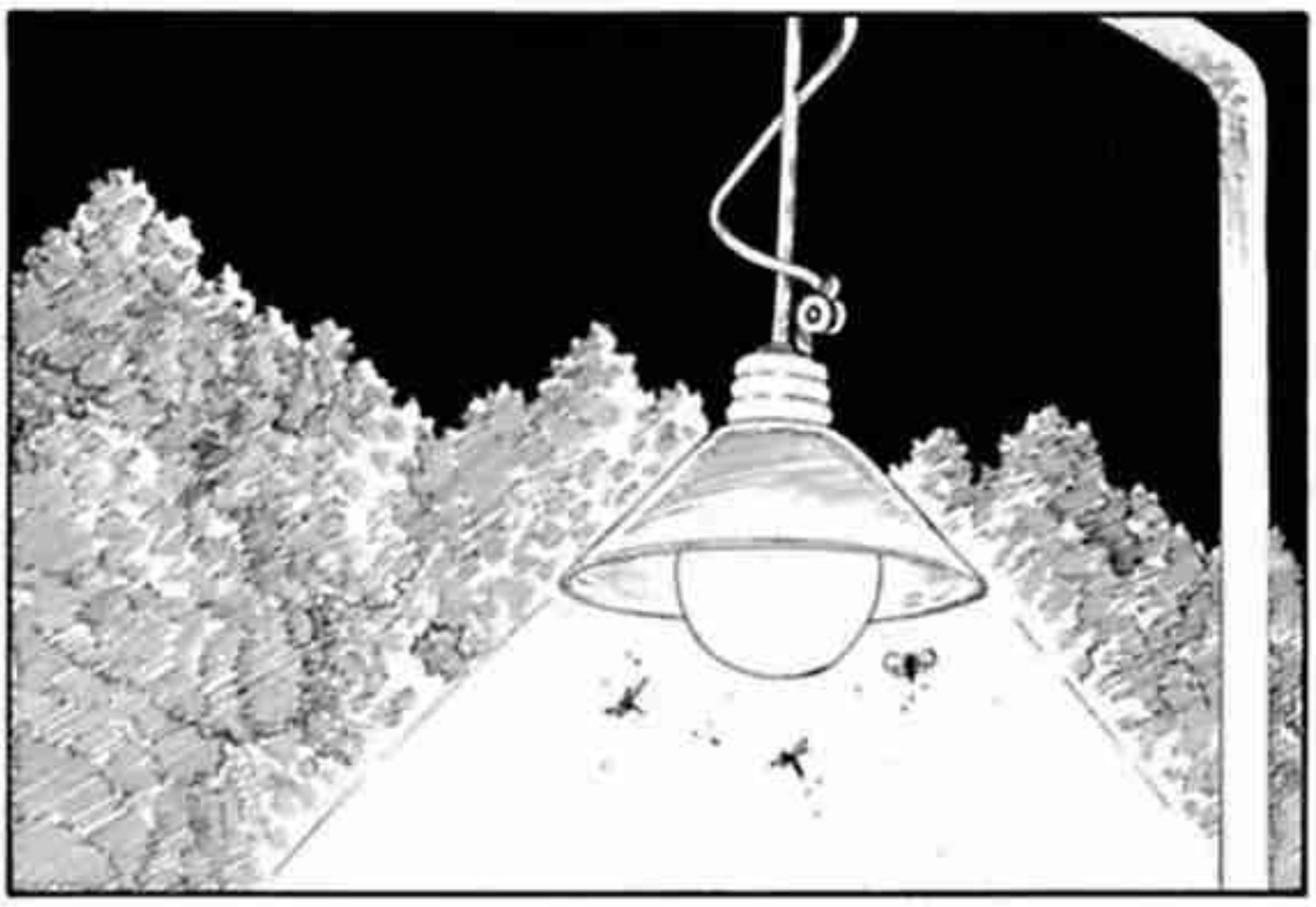
...

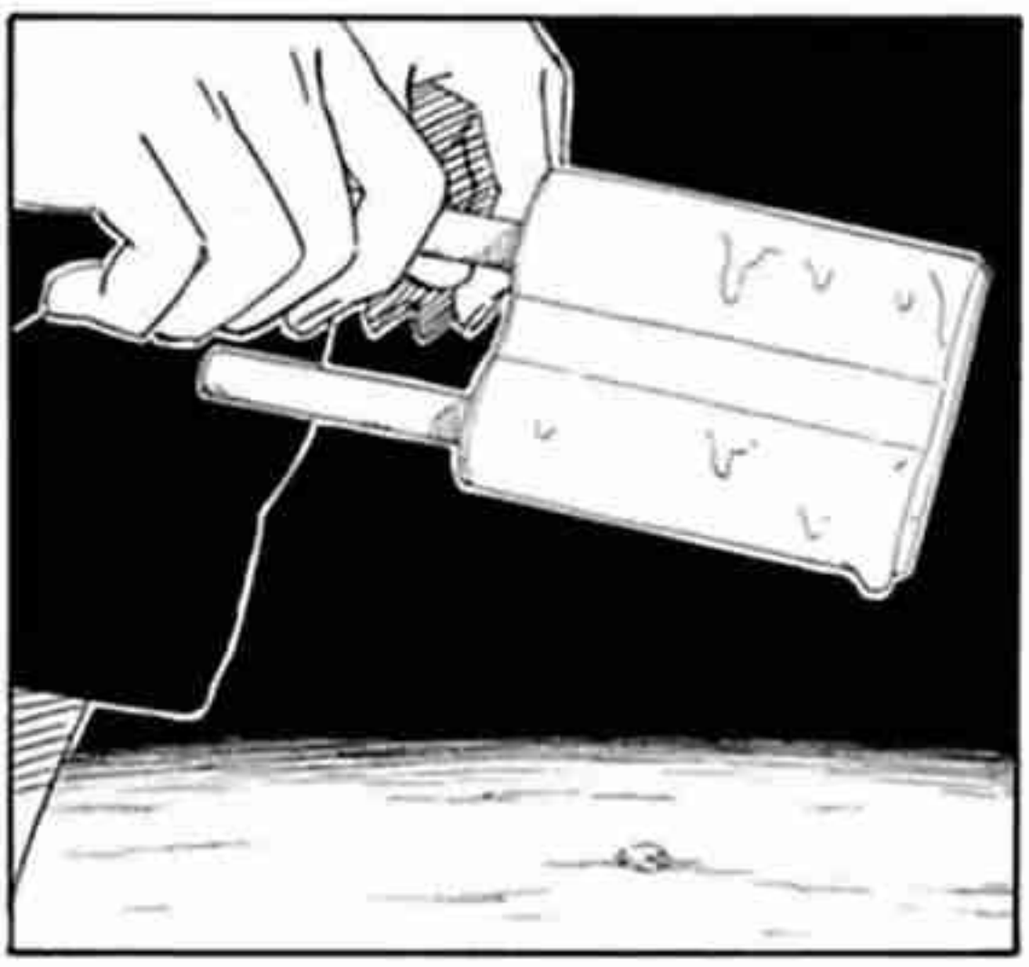
WANT TO GO TO ICHIRAKU? HAVE SOME RAMEN?
HEY, LET'S GO SOMEWHERE AND CATCH UP!

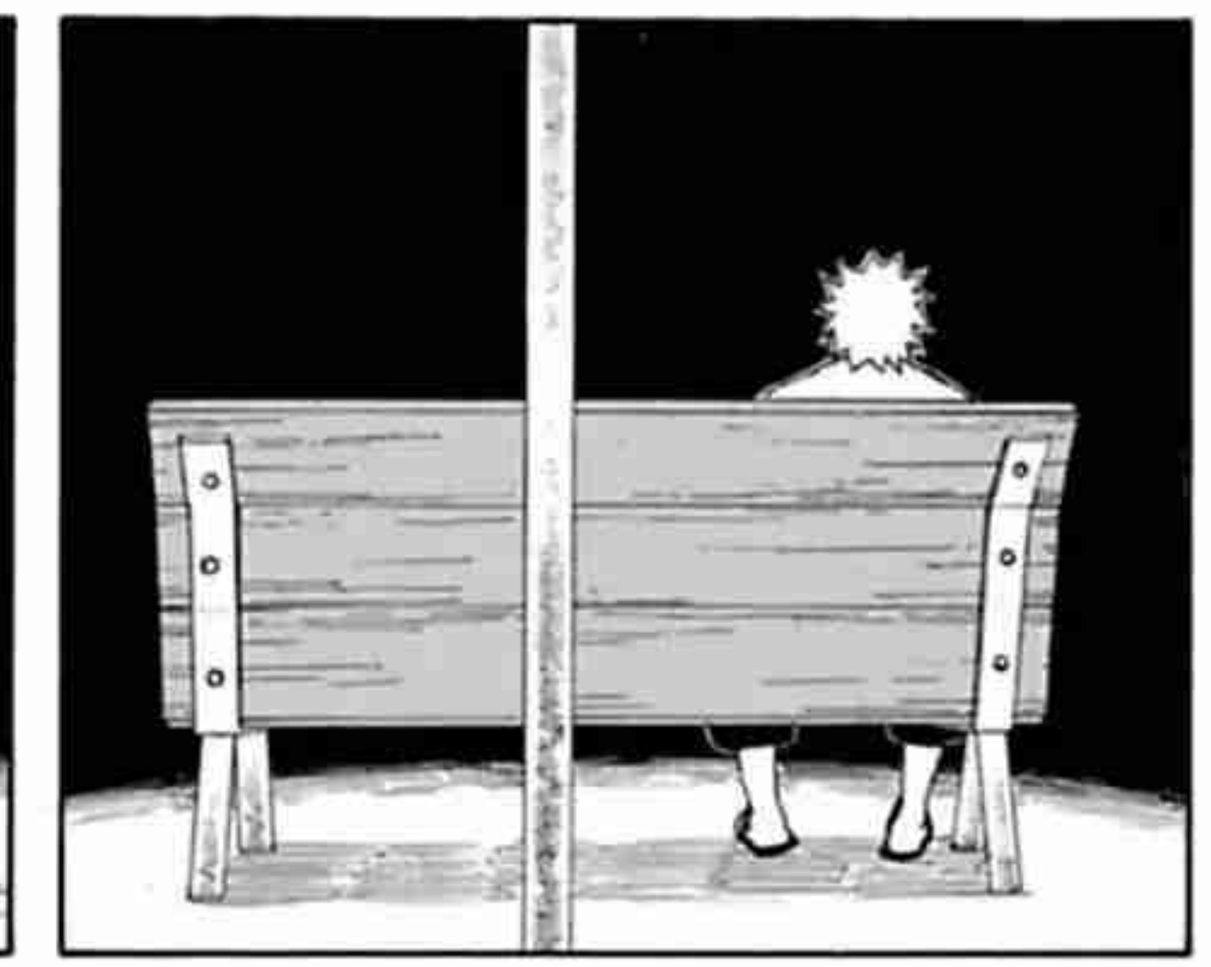
めし
NO THANKS ...
SHUP

WEEKLY NINJITSU

(24-Hour Convenience Store)

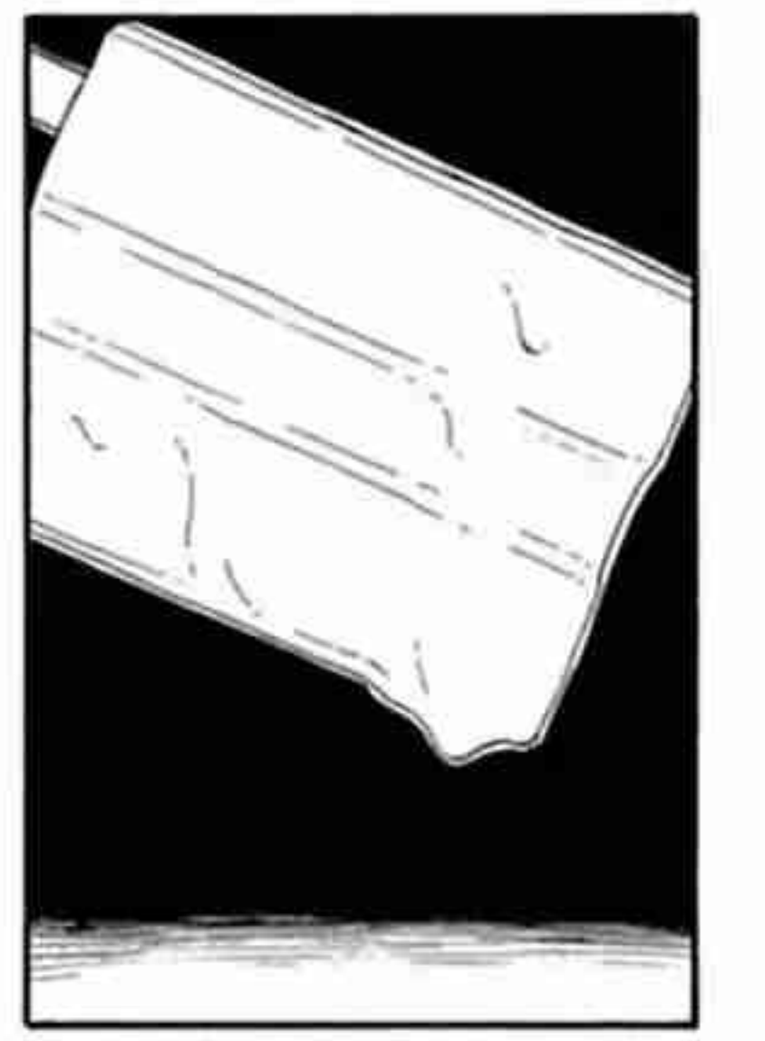






READ
THIS
WAY

PITTER...

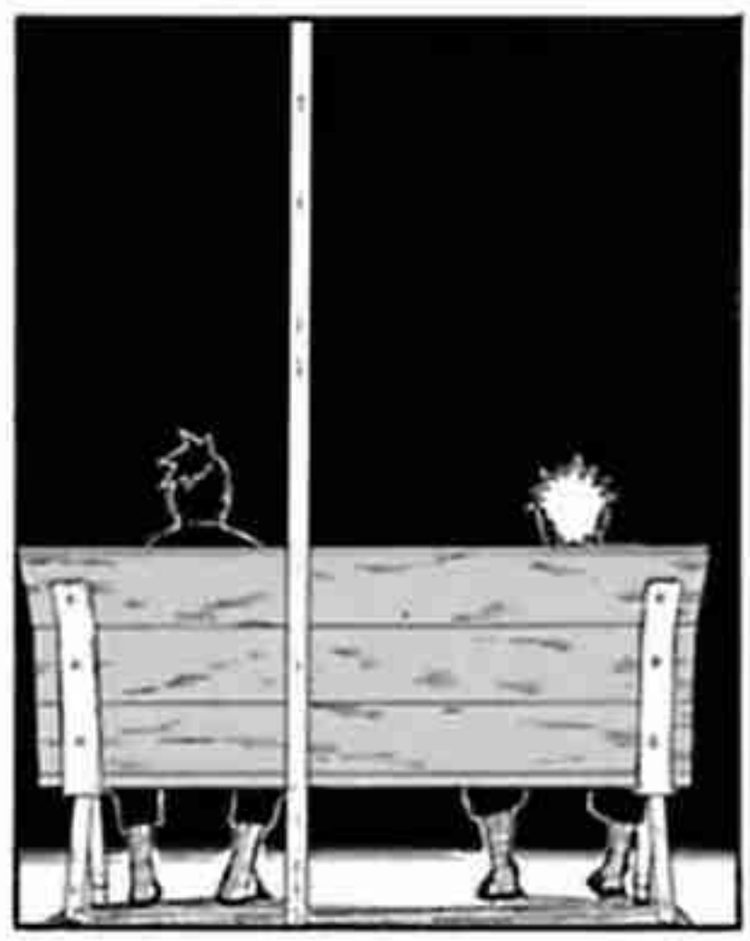


SPATTER
SPATTER

SHUG SHUG

...!
NARUTO...

...



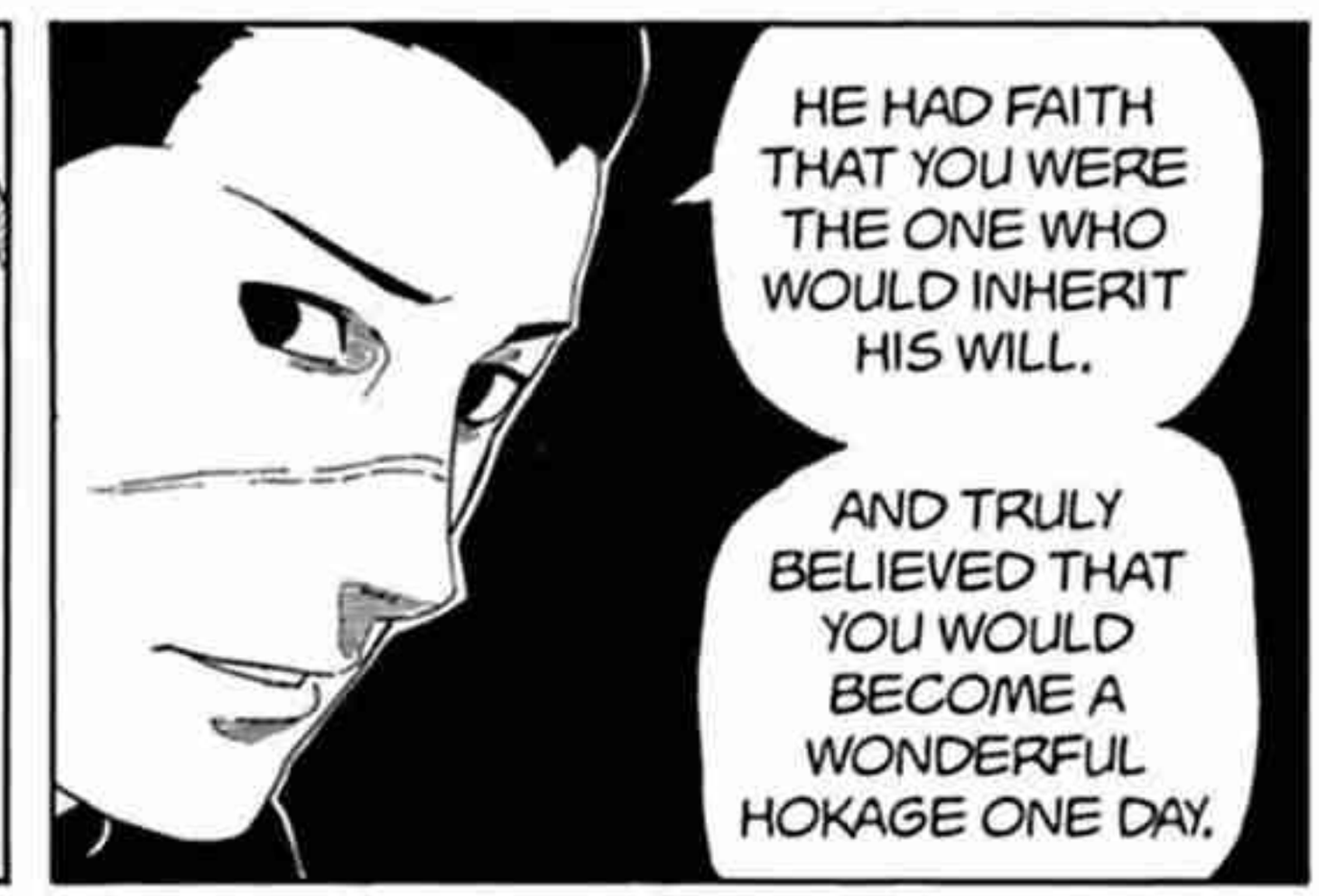
...I HEARD ABOUT LORD JIRAIYA.
TMP

BUT I ONLY ENDED UP SHOWING PERVY SAGE THE WORST, MOST UN-COOL SIDE OF ME...
I...

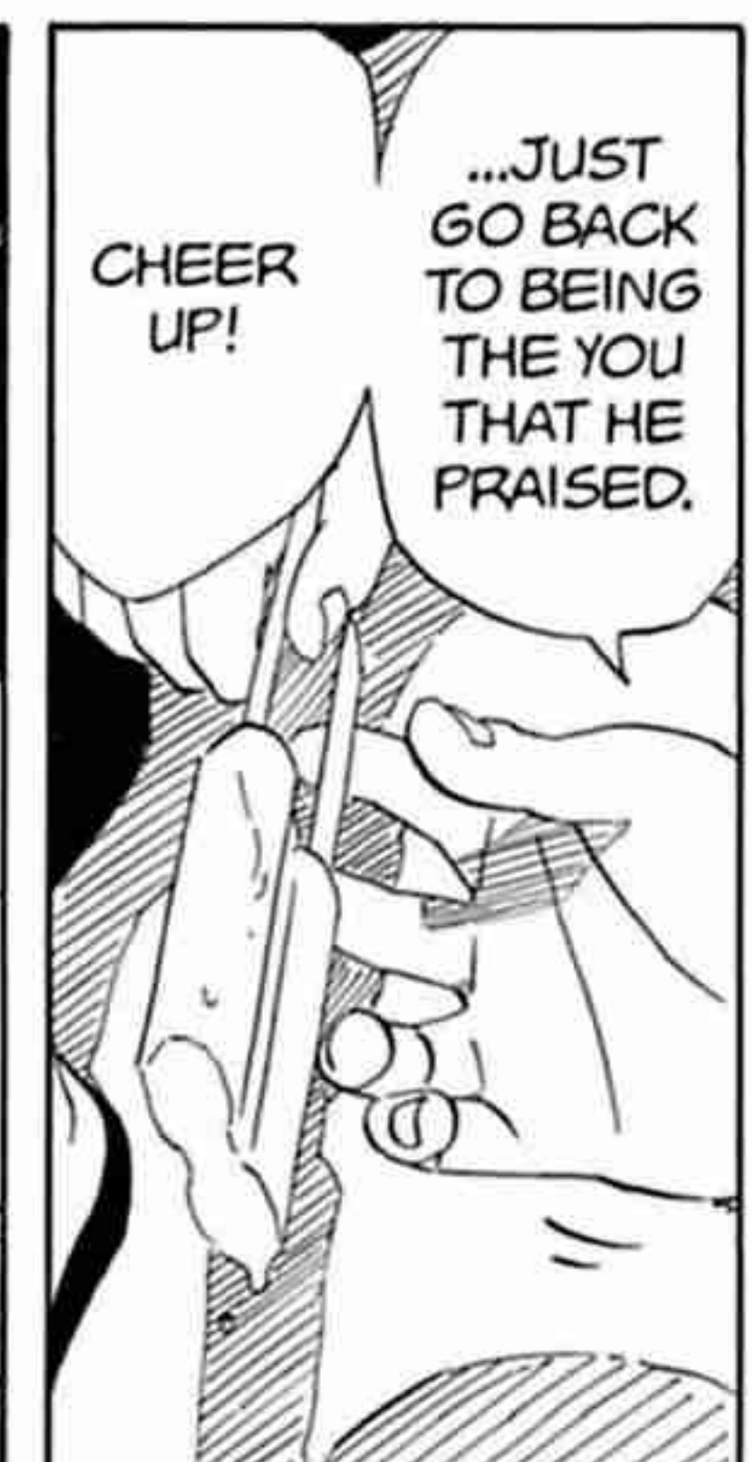
I... WANTED HIM TO KEEP WATCHING OVER ME...
...WANTED HIM TO SEE ME BECOME HOKAGE...

READ
THIS
WAY

HE WAS ALWAYS BOASTING ABOUT YOU, SAYING YOU WERE LIKE HIS OWN GRAND-CHILD.
LORD JIRAIYA ONLY EVER HAD PRAISE FOR YOU.


HE HAD FAITH THAT YOU WERE THE ONE WHO WOULD INHERIT HIS WILL.
AND TRULY BELIEVED THAT YOU WOULD BECOME A WONDERFUL HOKAGE ONE DAY.

!

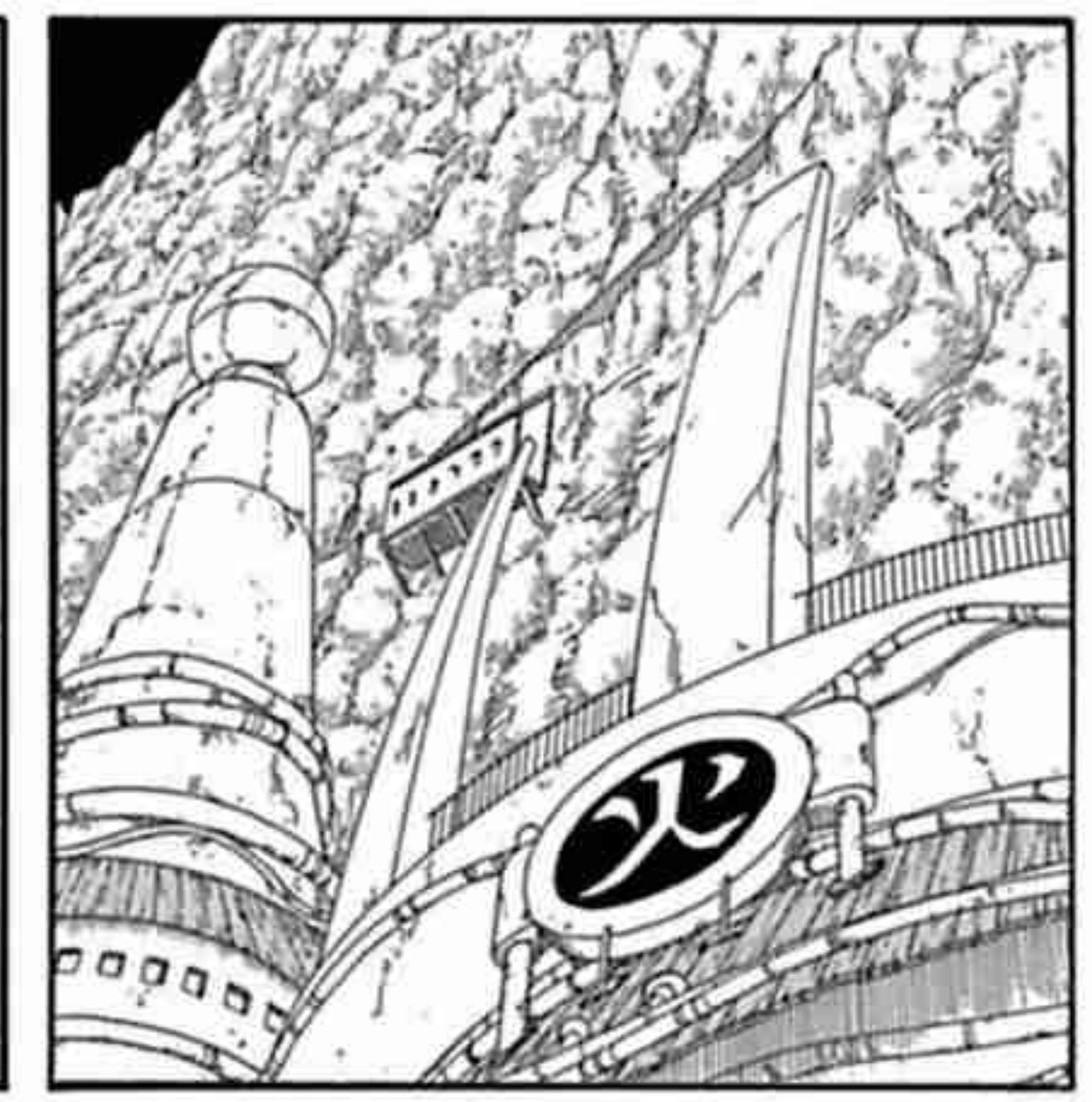

CHEER UP!
...JUST GO BACK TO BEING THE YOU THAT HE PRAISED.

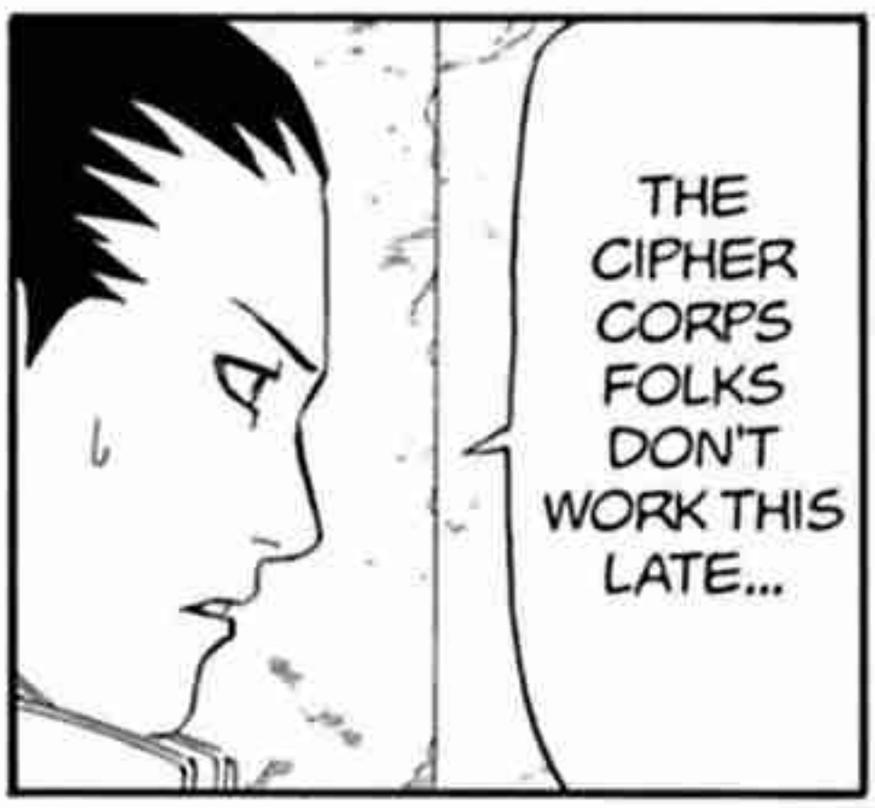
HE WOULDN'T BE HAPPY SEEING YOU SO BLUE.
I BELIEVE LORD JIRAIYA IS STILL WATCHING OVER YOU...
...EVEN THIS VERY MINUTE, FROM SOME-WHERE...
SO...
FSH

FOR YOU ARE A DISTINGUISHED STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGED BY LORD JIRAIYA OF THE PRODIGAL THREE HIMSELF.

PTAK

READ THIS WAY
9,31,8
106,7
207,15




THE CIPHER CORPS FOLKS DON'T WORK THIS LATE...

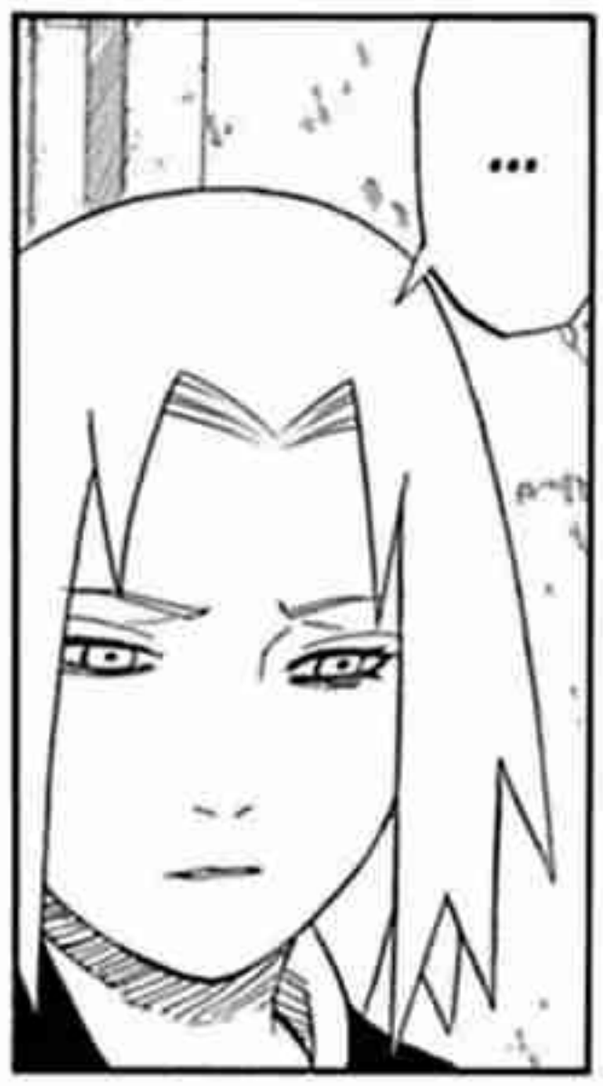
HUH?! RIGHT NOW?
TAKE THAT OVER TO THEM RIGHT AWAY.

KLAK
KLAK
HEY... WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
I ACTUALLY CAME HERE ON OTHER...

I'M PUTTING YOU IN CHARGE OF THE DECODING.
THEN SUMMON THEM AND TELL THEM IT'S ON MY ORDERS.
FSH

KLOMP

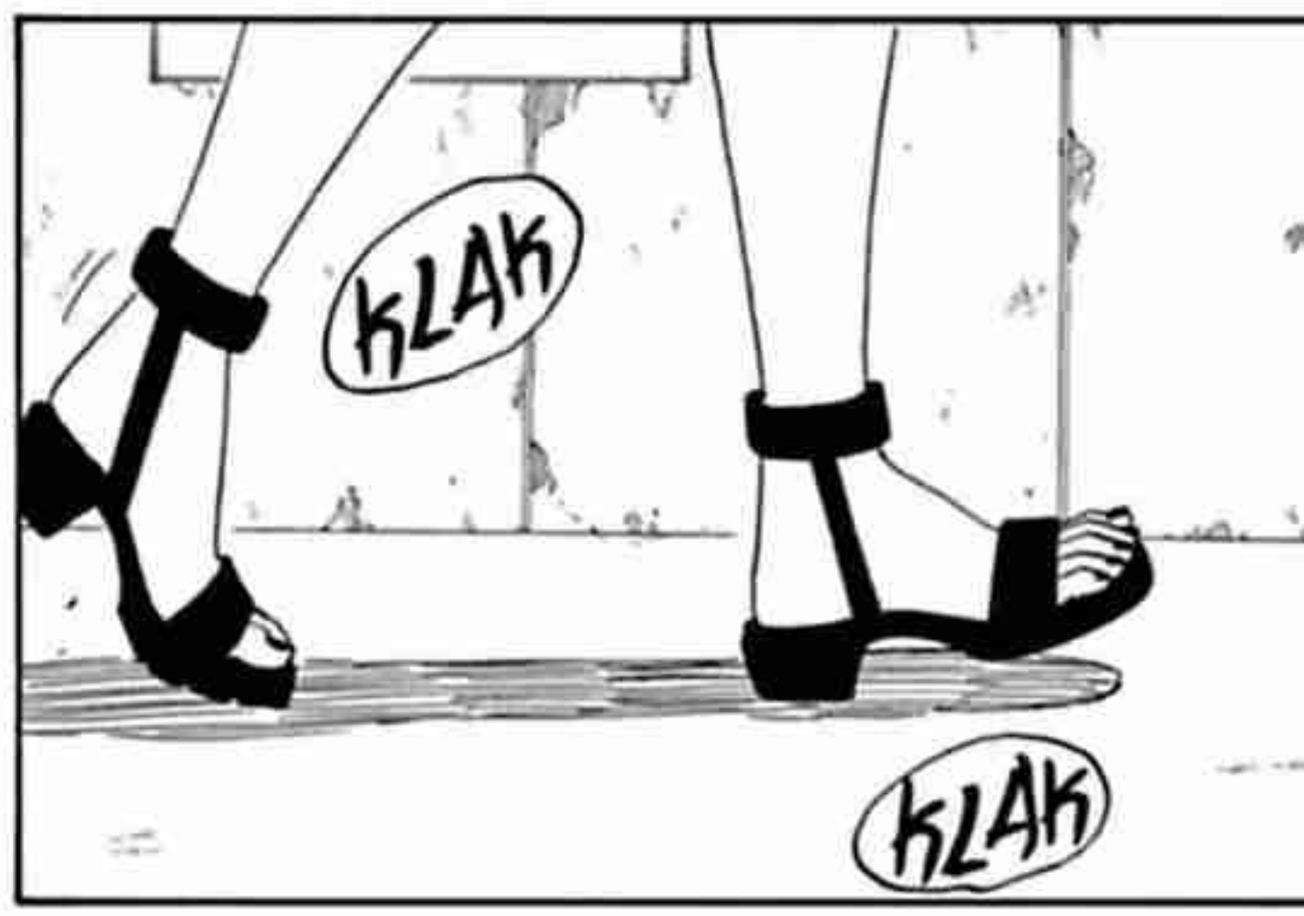
SHIKA-MARU!
LADY TSUNADE'S BEEN EXTREMELY BUSY ALL DAY.
BUT...


...

?

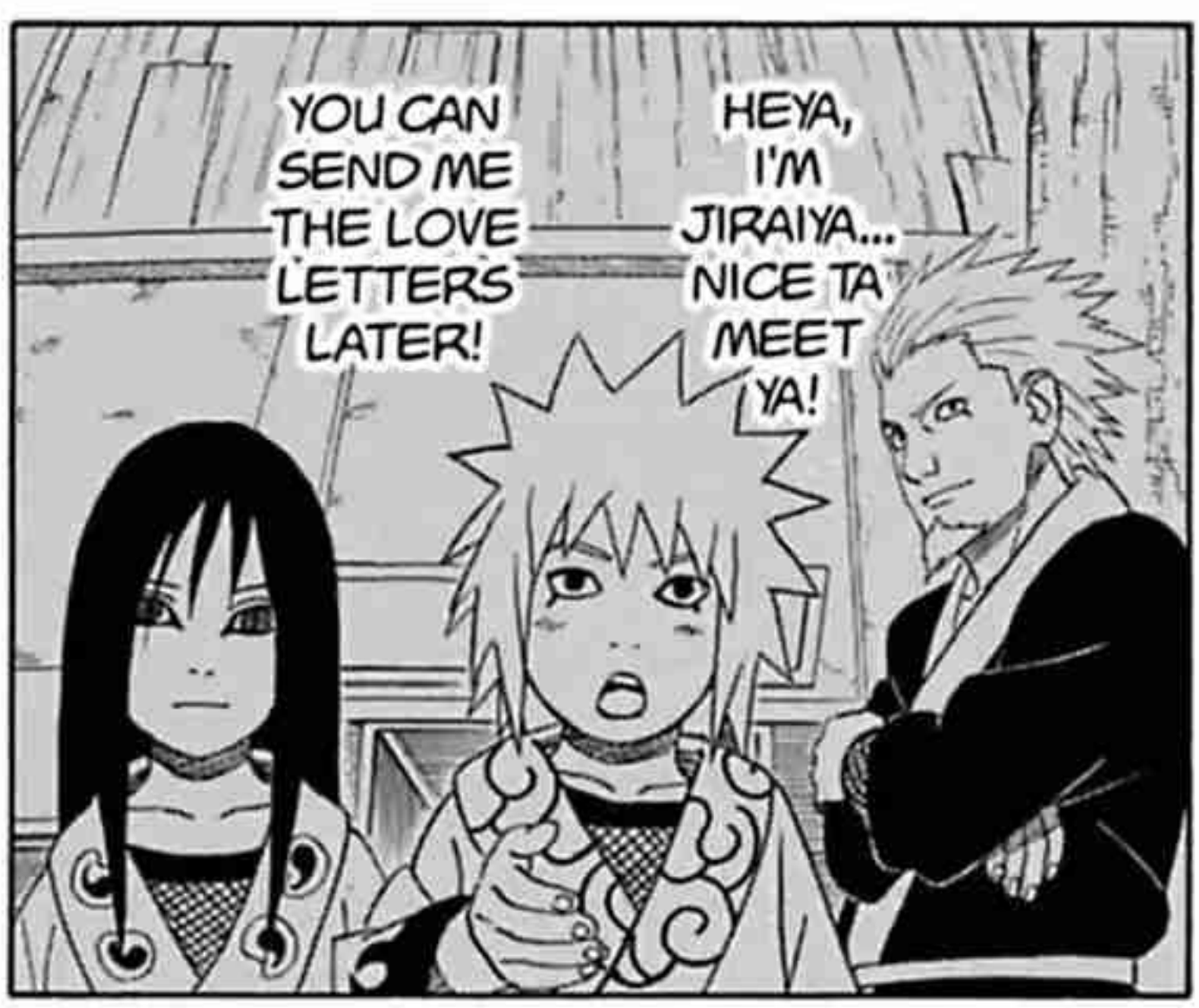
SHIKA-MARU.
WELL, SO HAVE...
PLEASE...

KLA...


KLAK
KLAK

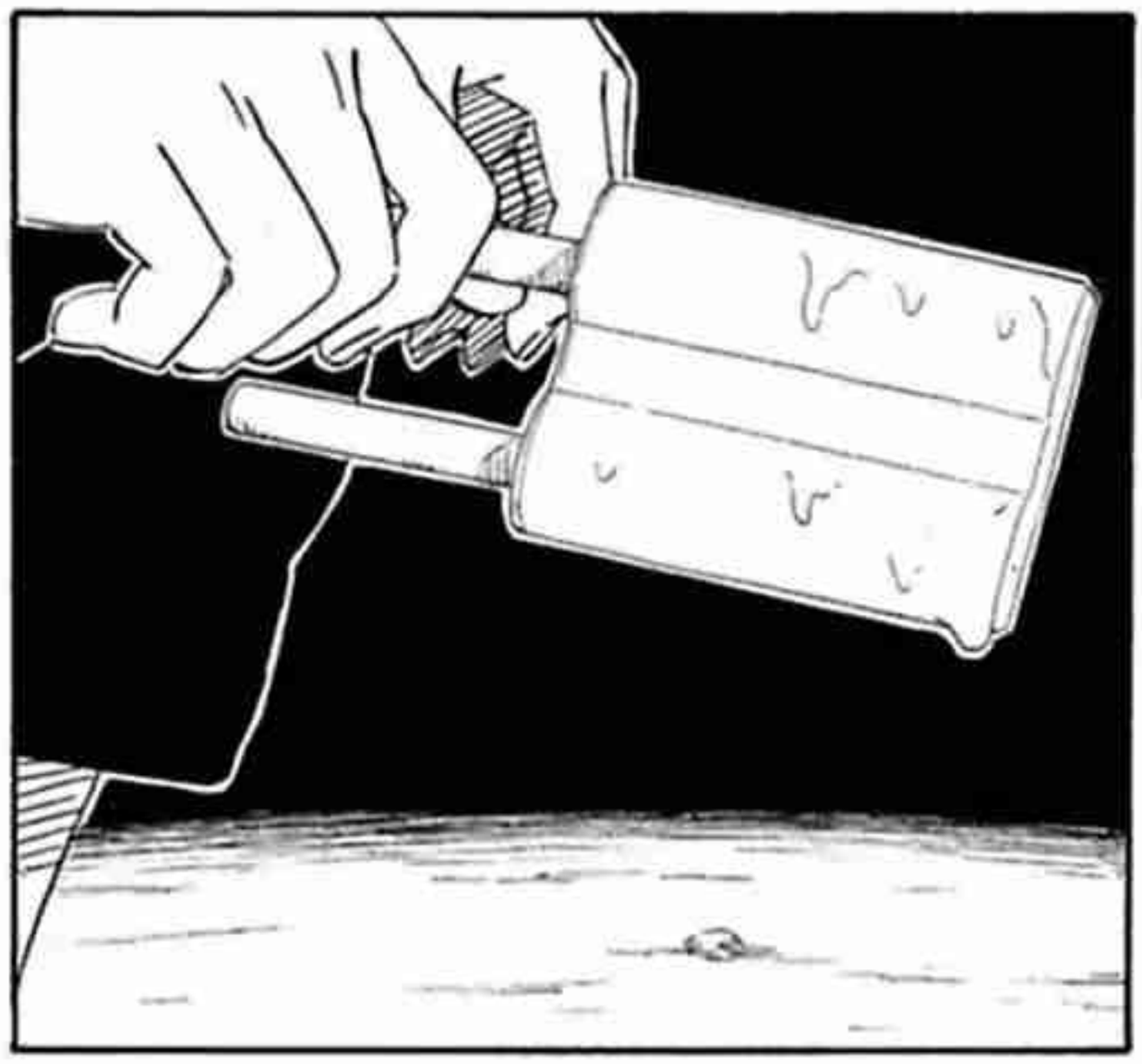
油

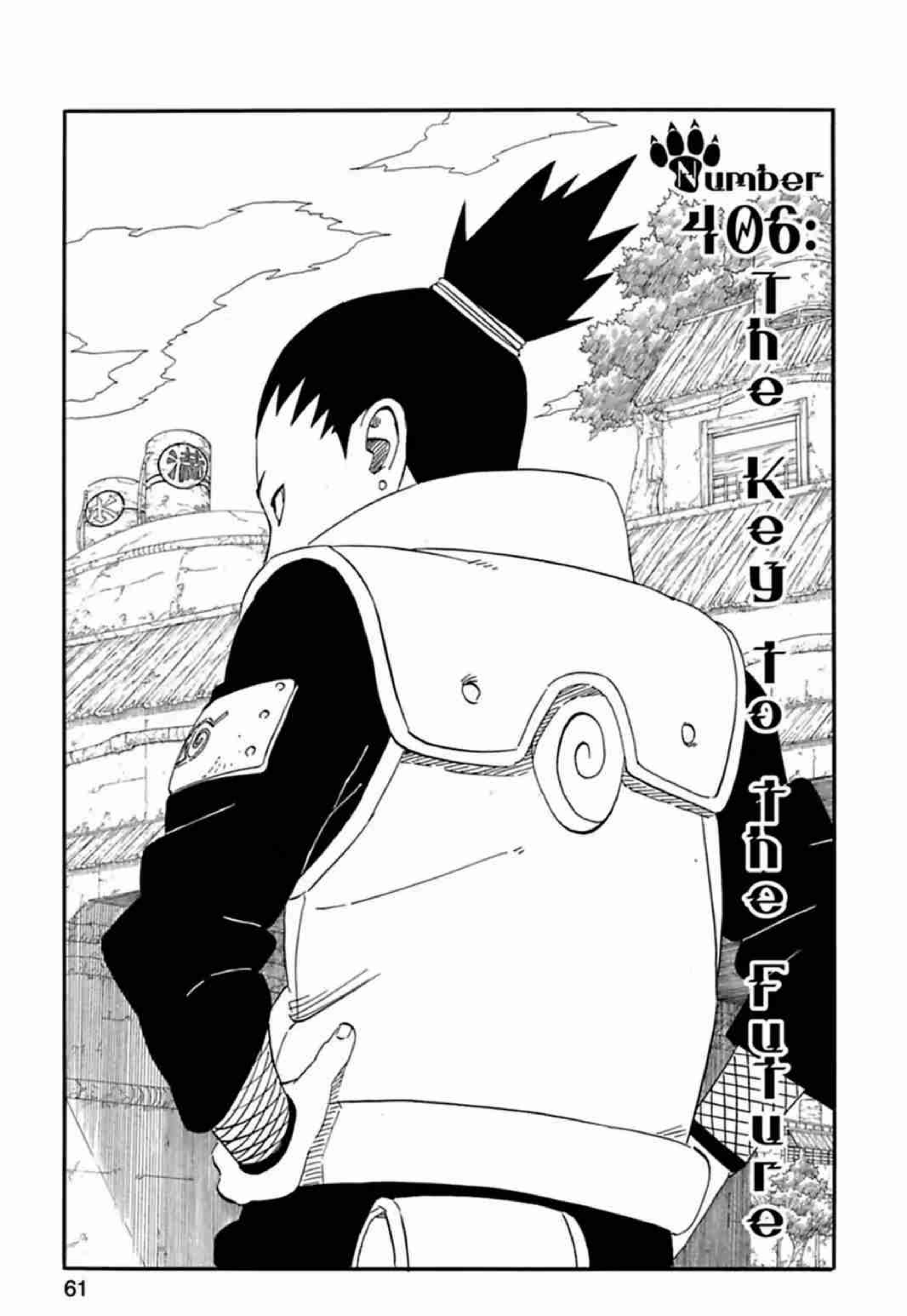
泰然自若
天衣無縫


YOU CAN SEND ME THE LOVE LETTERS LATER!
HEYA, I'M JIRAIYA... NICE TA MEET YA!

YOU FOOL...

HEE HEE HEE




Number 406:
The Key to the Future

THIS FROG SUPPOSEDLY CONTAINS A CAPTURED AMEGAKURE SHINOBI.

(Konohagakure Intel Division)

PLEASE RE-EXPAND.

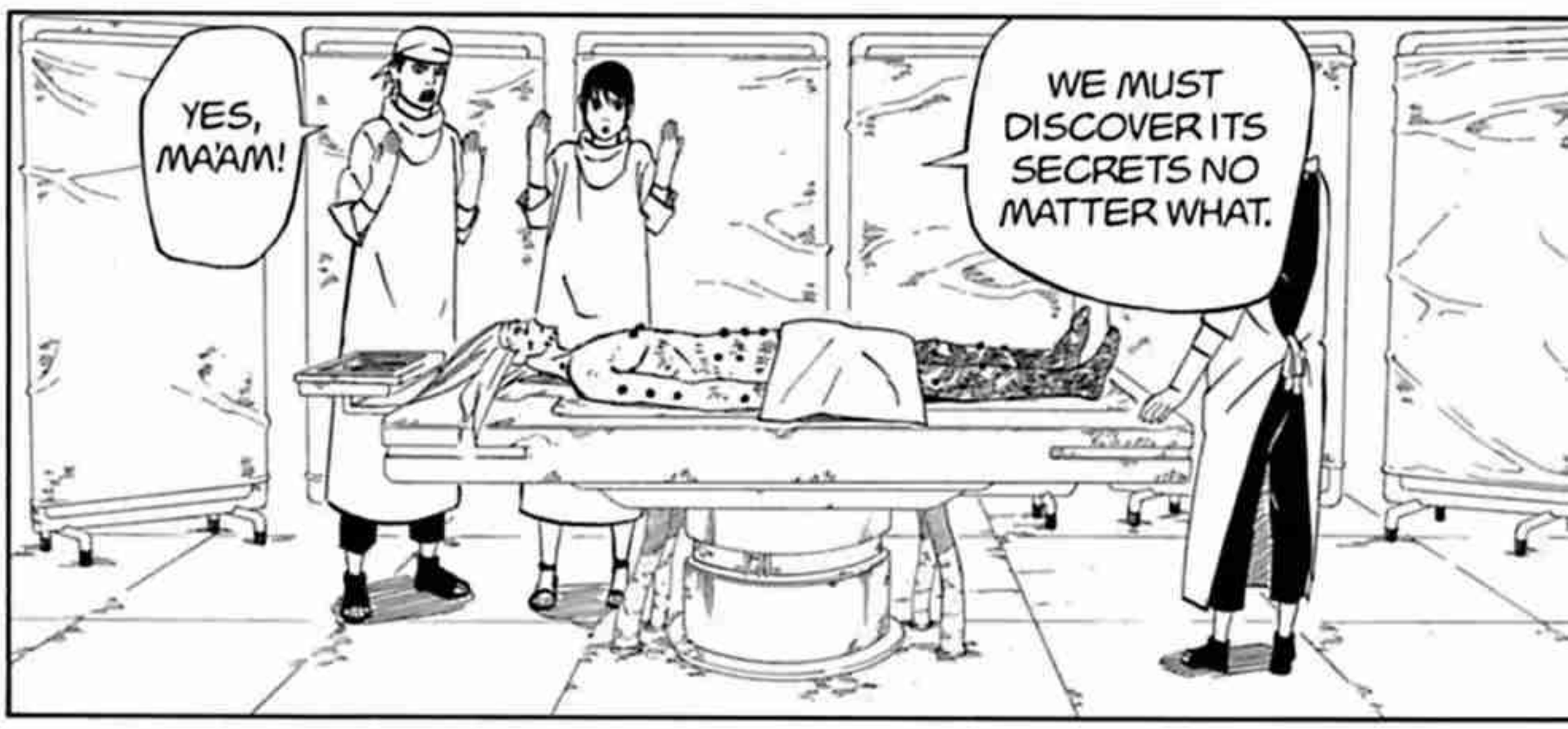
YES, I RECEIVED PRIOR NOTICE FROM LORD JIRAIYA.

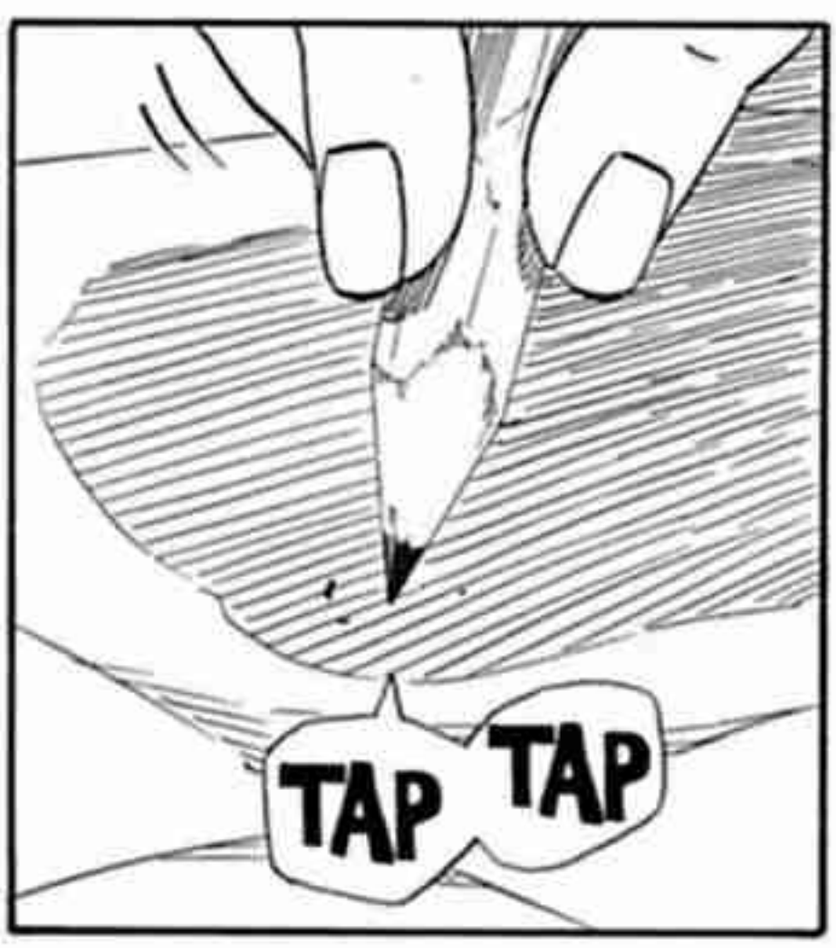
IT APPEARS HE NEVER INTENDED TO BATTLE PAIN.

IN THE BEGINNIN', JIRAIYA-BOY'S ONLY GOAL WAS TA GATHER INTELLI-GENCE.

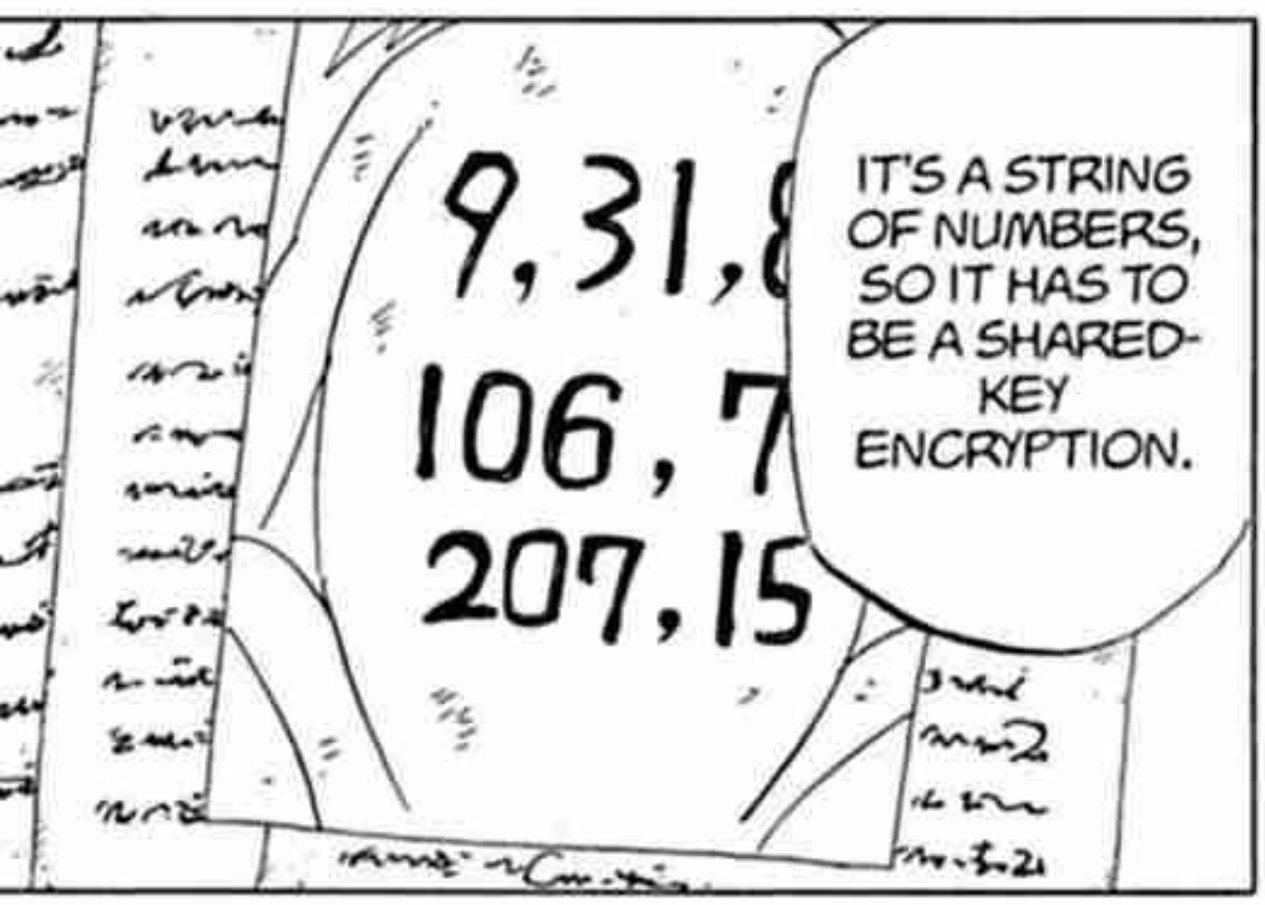
READ THIS WAY
...N' WITHOUT KNOWIN' THE EXTENT OF THEIR POWERS, NO ONE COULD EVER WIN AGAINST 'EM NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES THEY FOUGHT.
BUT PAIN'S ABILITIES FAR EXCEEDED HIS IMAGINATION...
ON TOP O' THAT, HE COULD'VE GOTTEN AWAY IF HE HAD A' WANTED TO...
...BUT HE SACRIFICED HIS LIFE SO THAT HE COULD LEAVE US THIS CODED MESSAGE.
...N' ALMOST MANAGED TO UNCOVER THEIR SECRETS.
NO ONE BUT JIRAIYA-BOY COULD'VE GOTTEN AS FAR...
JIRAIYA-BOY PUSHED HIMSELF BEYOND HIS OWN LIMITS...
BE AS ROUGH AS YOU NEED TO BE. GET IT ALL OUT OF HIM!
I INTEND TO.
HE BEQUEATHED THE FUTURE TO Y'ALL.

(Autopsy Room 3)



WELL?
HMM... THIS ISN'T IN ANY KONOHA CODE.
IT DOESN'T CORRESPOND TO ANY OF OUR ALGORITHMS.


9,31,8
106,7
207,15
IT'S A STRING OF NUMBERS, SO IT HAS TO BE A SHARED-KEY ENCRYPTION.

BUT CONSIDERING THE FACT THAT LORD JIRAIYA WROTE THIS IN A RUSH...
...I DON'T THINK IT COULD BE ANYTHING TOO COMPLEX.

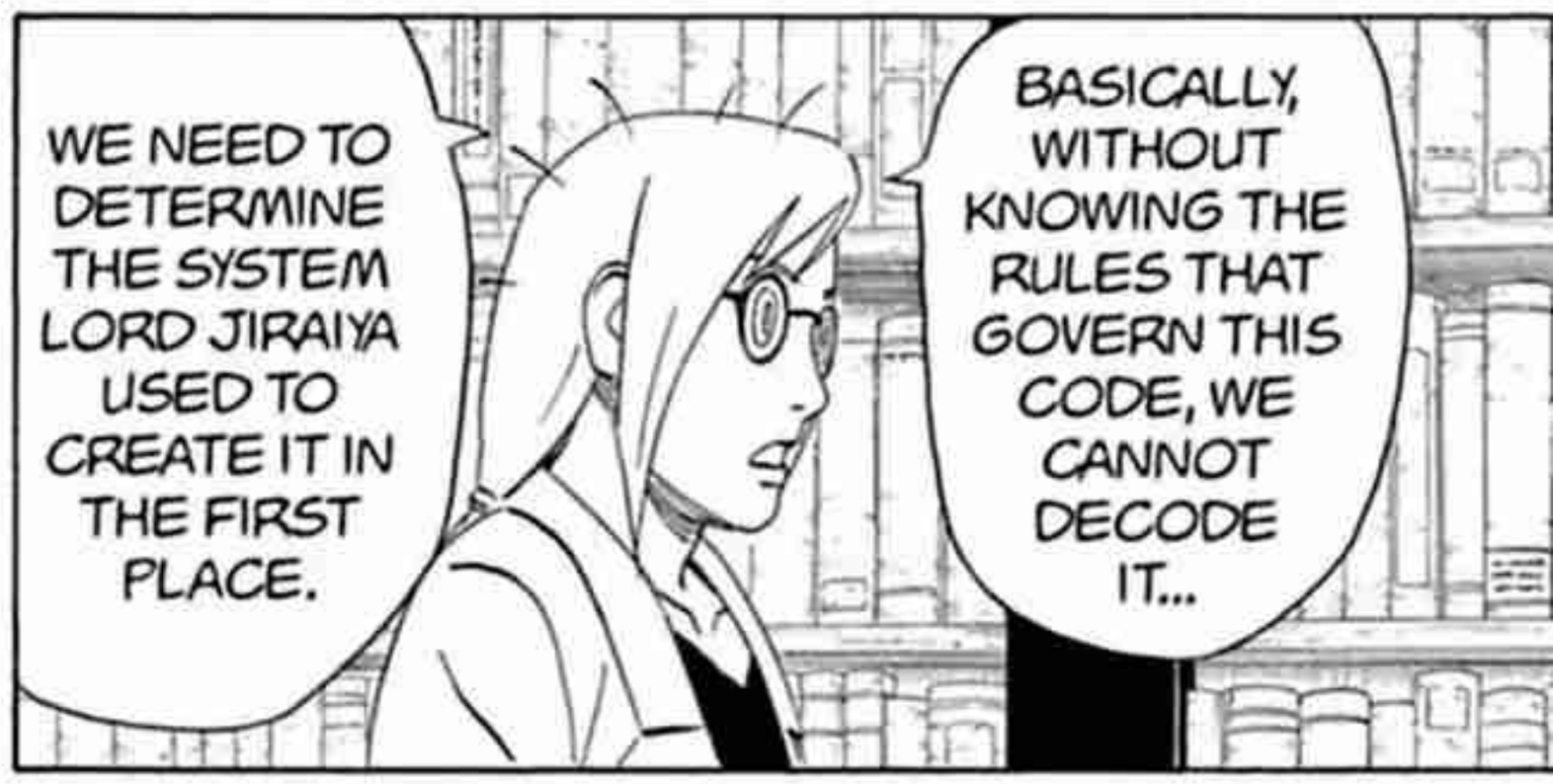
AHEM!

CAN YOU DECODE IT?

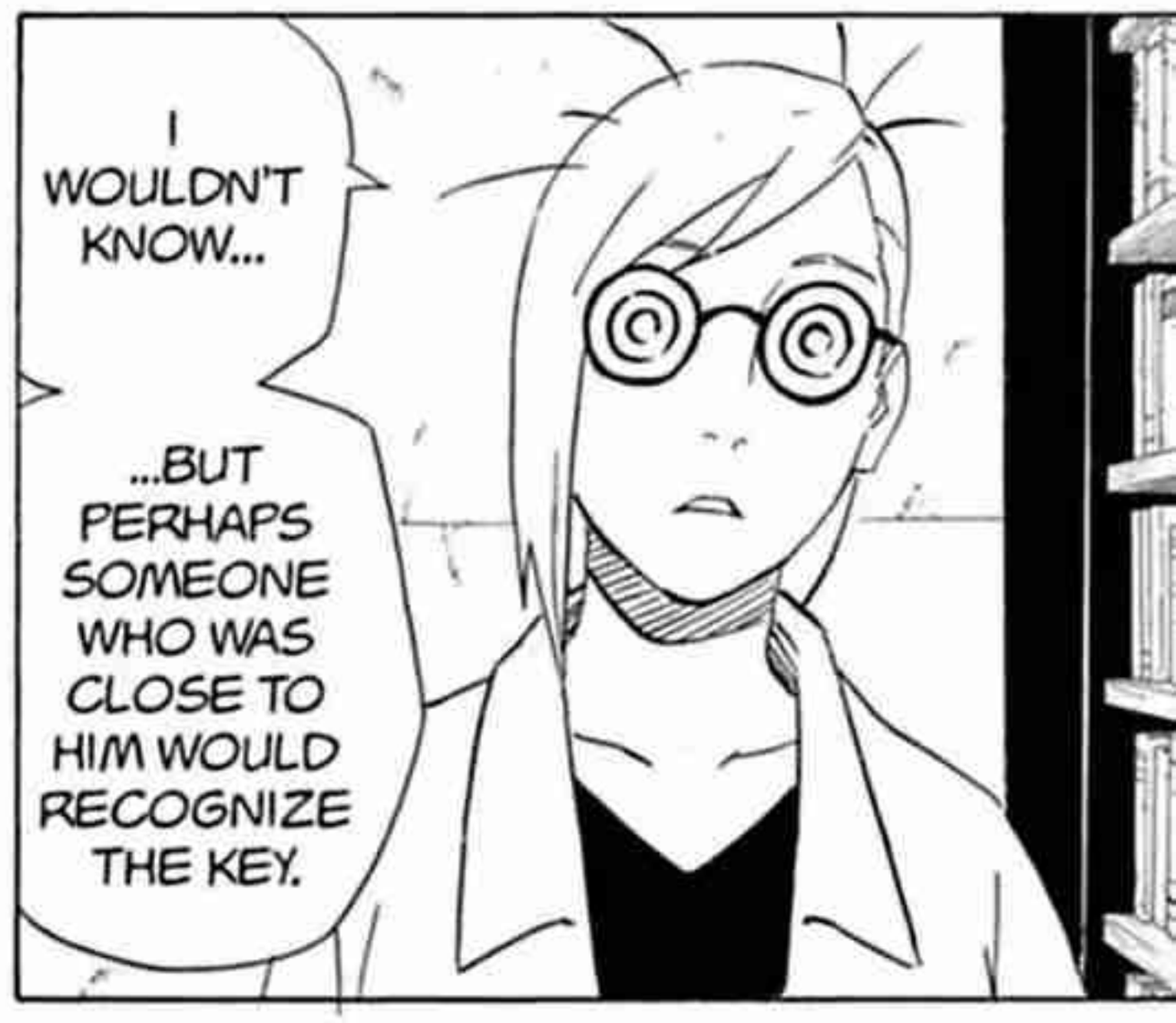
KEY?

KLIK
UNLESS WE KNOW WHAT THE KEY IS, IT'S IMPOSSIBLE!

SO HOW DO WE DO THAT?


WE NEED TO DETERMINE THE SYSTEM LORD JIRAIYA USED TO CREATE IT IN THE FIRST PLACE.
BASICALLY, WITHOUT KNOWING THE RULES THAT GOVERN THIS CODE, WE CANNOT DECODE IT...

ALTHOUGH GIVEN THE CIRCUM-STANCES OF HIS DEATH...
...IF HE CAME UP WITH IT HASTILY TO PREVENT THE ENEMY FROM DISCERNING HIS MESSAGE, THE CHANCES ARE SLIMMER.

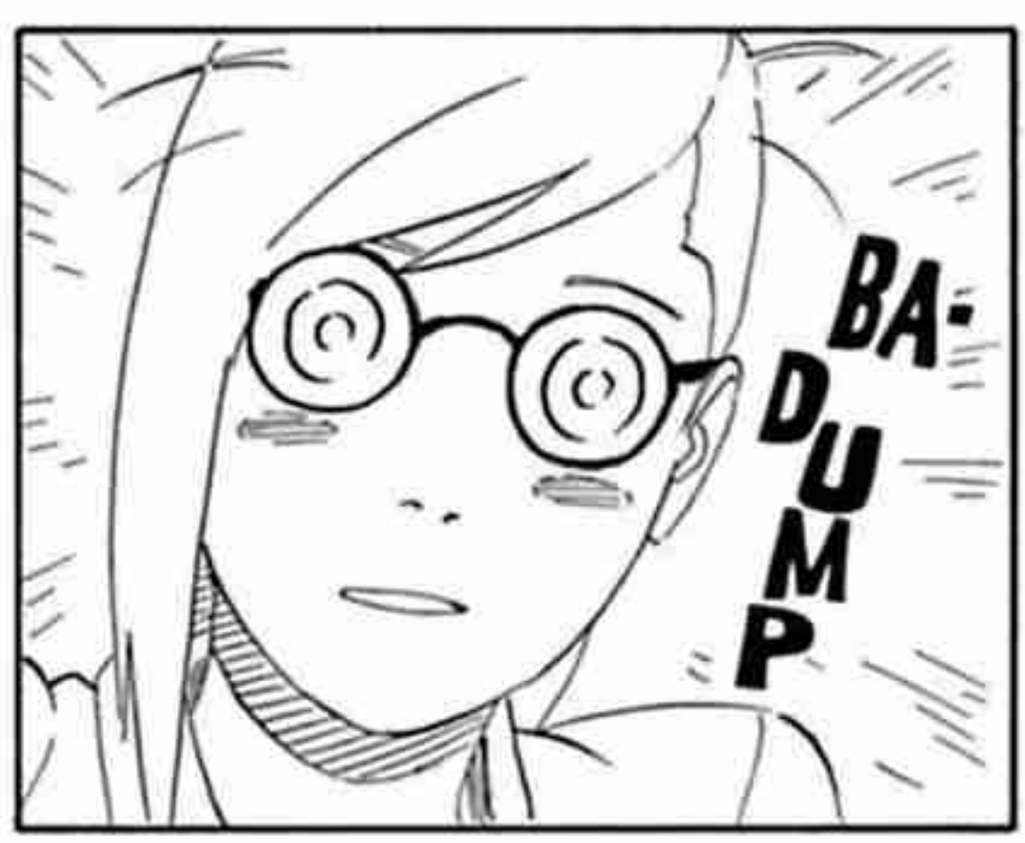

I WOULDN'T KNOW...
...BUT PERHAPS SOMEONE WHO WAS CLOSE TO HIM WOULD RECOGNIZE THE KEY.

KATOK KATOK
IF I FIND ANYTHING OUT, I'LL BE BACK...
WELL, THANK YOU VERY MUCH.


CONSIDER WHO HE MAY HAVE INTENDED THAT MESSAGE FOR...
ASK THEM, AND PERHAPS YOU'LL FIND SOME CLUES.

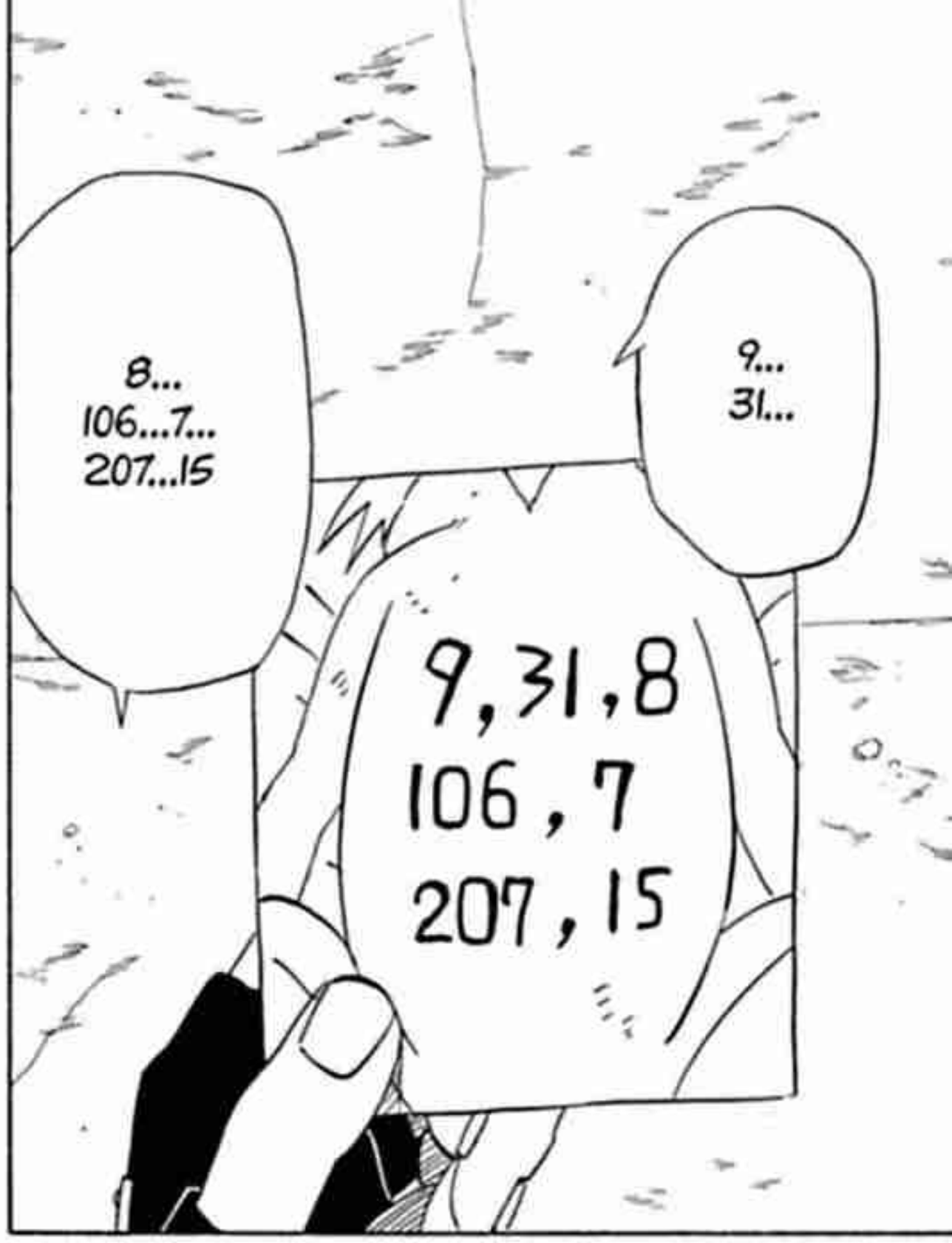
LADY FIFTH OR MASTER KAKASHI...
THAT WOULD BE...
HMM...

KUNK
SURE...
...BUT I'LL BE HOME IN BED, SO JUST COME BY THE HOUSE, OK?


BA-DUMP

SOMEONE'S GOTTA STAY BEHIND. ♪
WHAT ABOUT YOU, SHIHO?
WELL... I'M HEADING HOME TO SLEEP.
SHRUG
SHRUG

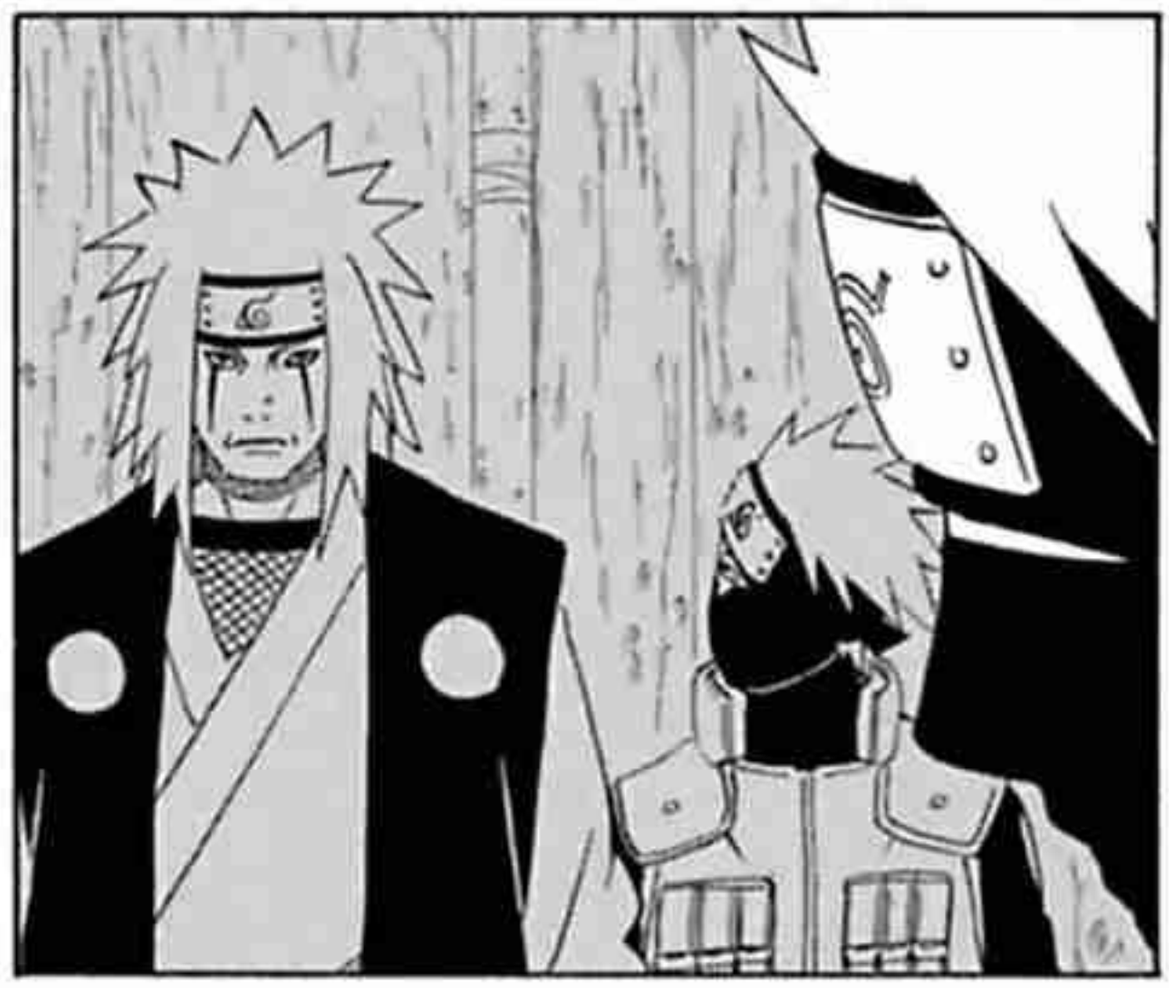
SHUP
SHUP


8...
106...7...
207...15
9...
31...
9,31,8
106,7
207,15

SKRITCH...

...

ANY OF THESE NUMBERS EVER COME UP IN CONVER-SATION WITH LORD JIRAIYA...?
ANYTHING COME TO MIND?



YES?
THIS ONE, 106...

IT'S 106.
WHAT IS?

LORD JIRAIYA?

106 CENTI-METERS.
...

I'VE ALREADY ASKED LADY FIFTH.
SIGH... I GUESS THAT LEAVES NARUTO...

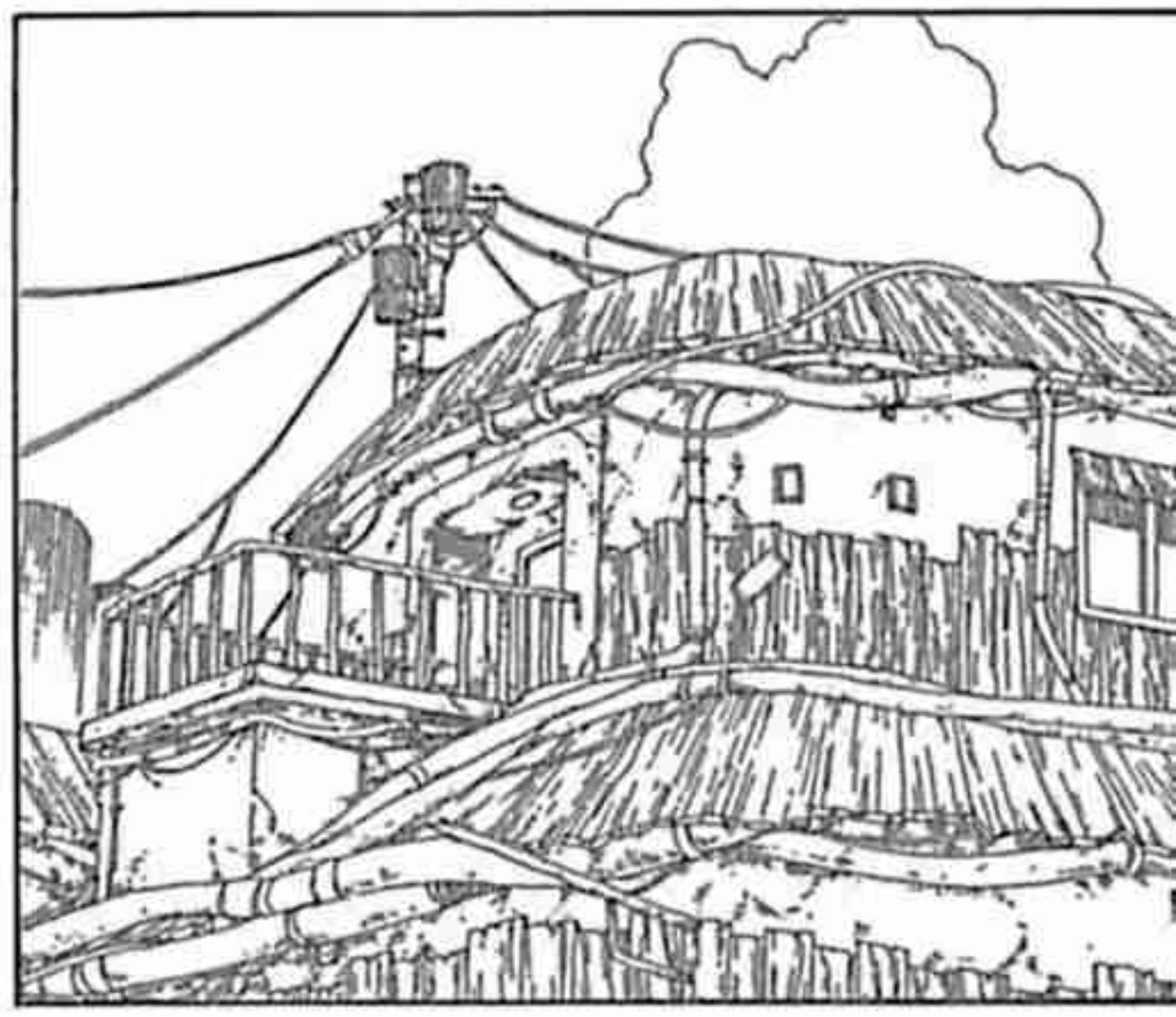
NOTHING'S COMING TO ME.
WHY DON'T YOU TRY LADY FIFTH OR NARUTO NEXT?

NAH...IT COULDN'T BE...
...
?

NO PROMISES.

SO THANKS FOR CHECKING IN ON HIM.
ASIDE FROM THE CODE, I'M A TAD WORRIED ABOUT HIM...

DANG-DONG
DANG-DONG
GAH, HE'S OUT.



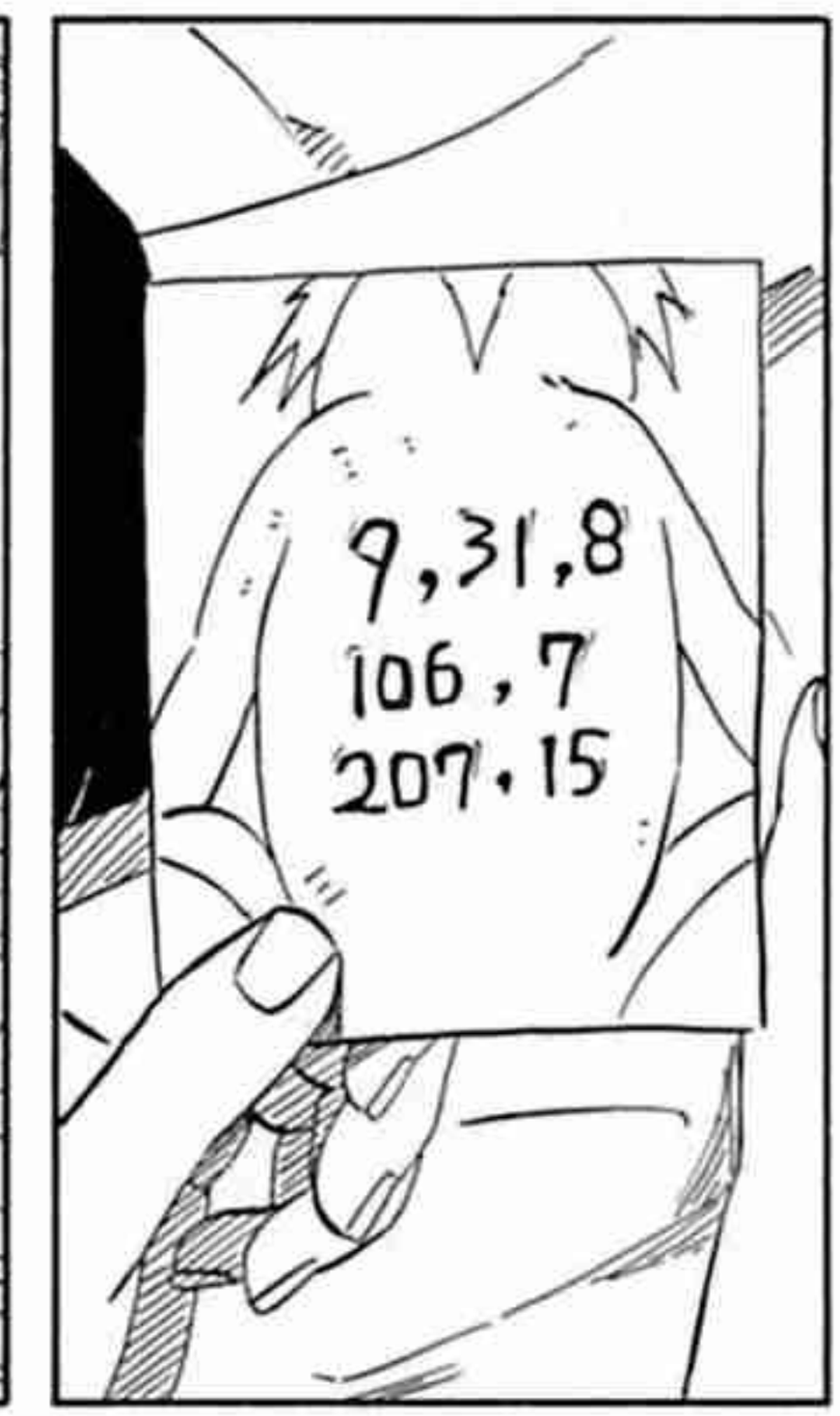
CAN I COME IN?

...OH. IT'S YOU, SHIKA-MARU.
WHADYA WANT?

!
KLAK

READ
THIS
WAY

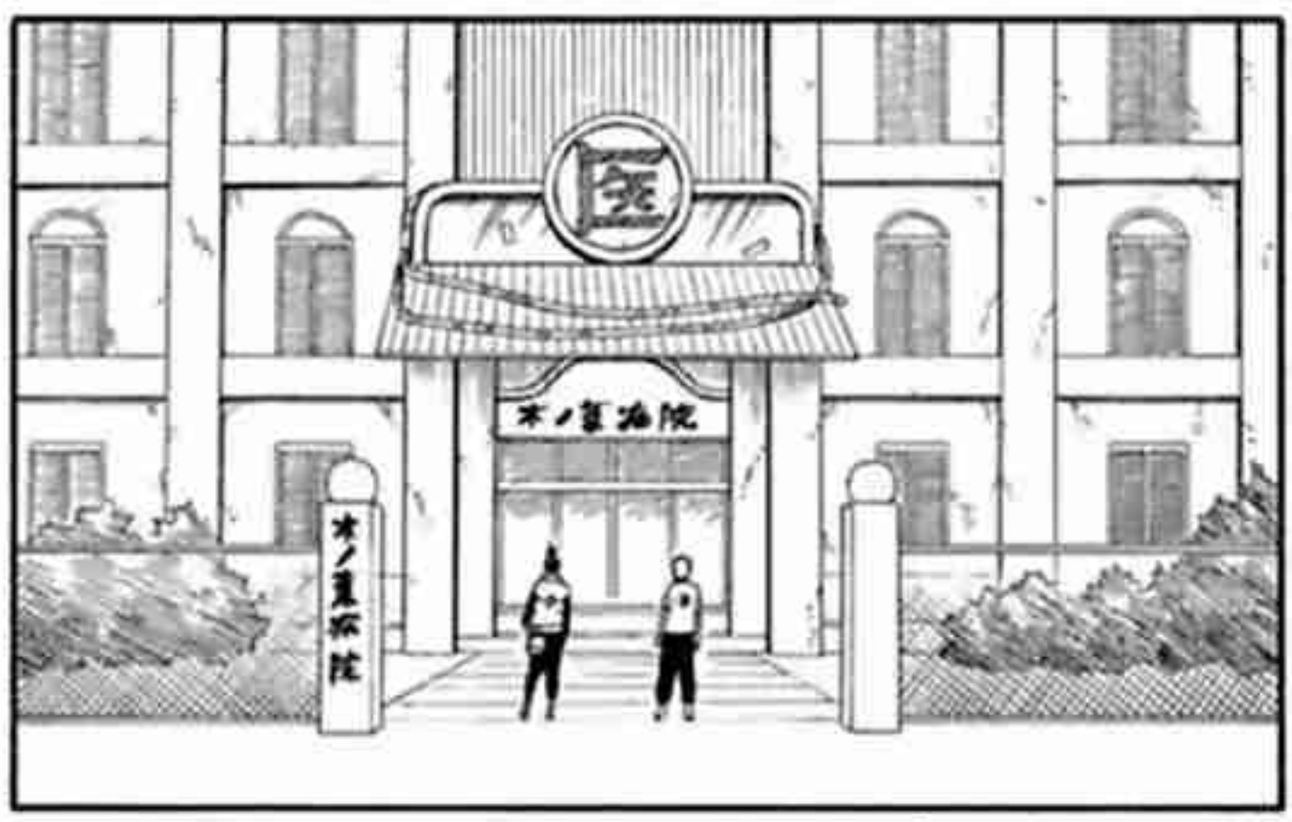
WELL? DOES IT SEEM FAMILIAR AT ALL?


9,31,8
106,7
207,15

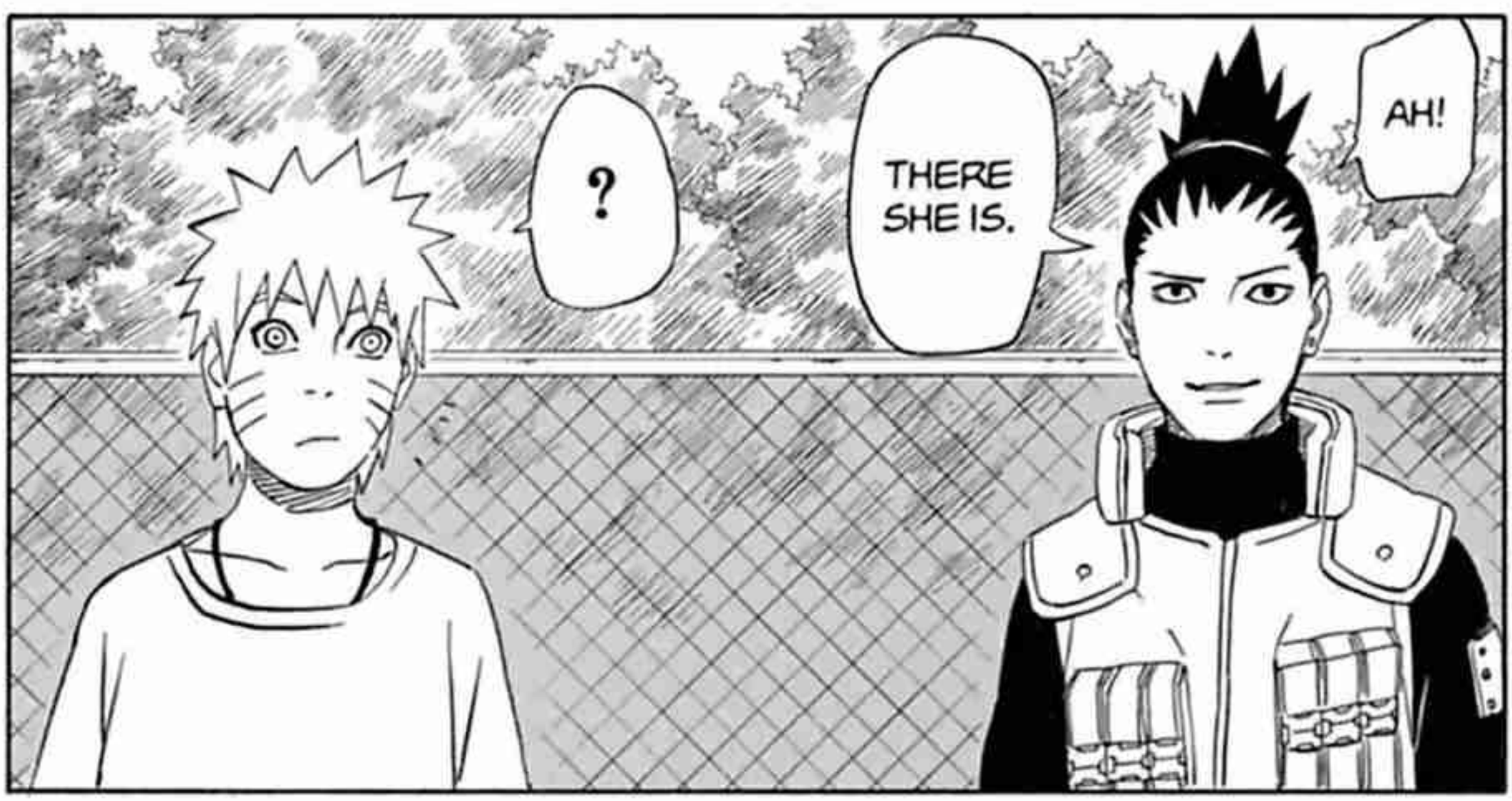
...

!
No
Ni
Ne

HEY NARUTO, YOU STILL WITH ME?




(Konoha Hospital)



HUH?!
MISS KURENAI ...?!
YEAH...

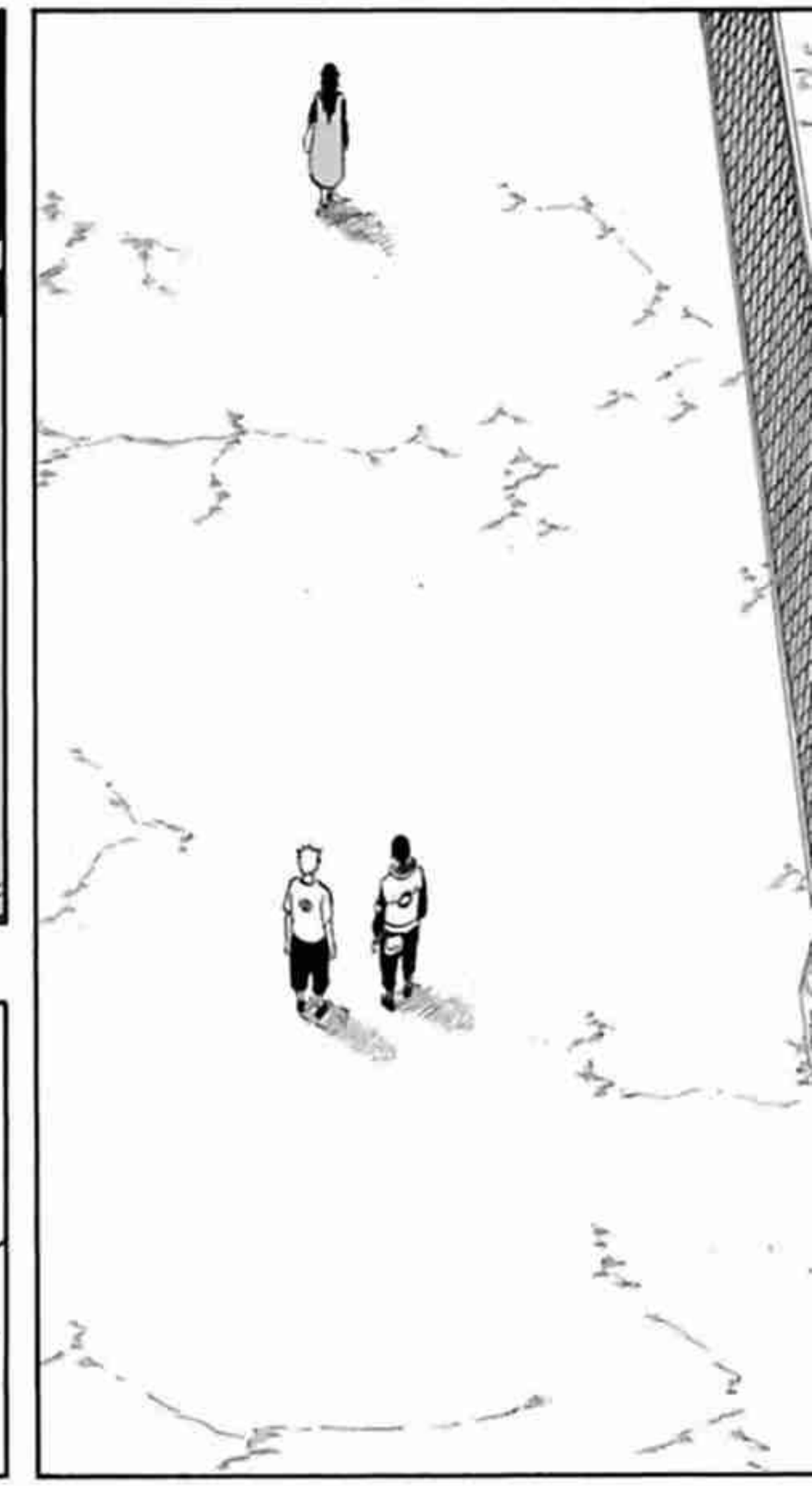
!

YIKES, YOU'RE STILL AS OBNOXIOUS AS EVER.
SHE'S PREGNANT, NOT FAT!
YOUR STOMACH'S BIGGER THAN CHOJI'S!!
YOU WERE HOSPITAL-IZED FOR EATING TOO MUCH BARBEQUE ?!!
...

SHIKAMARU, HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU TO STOP COMING HERE?

TH-THEN...
HUH?!

(Konoha Hospital)



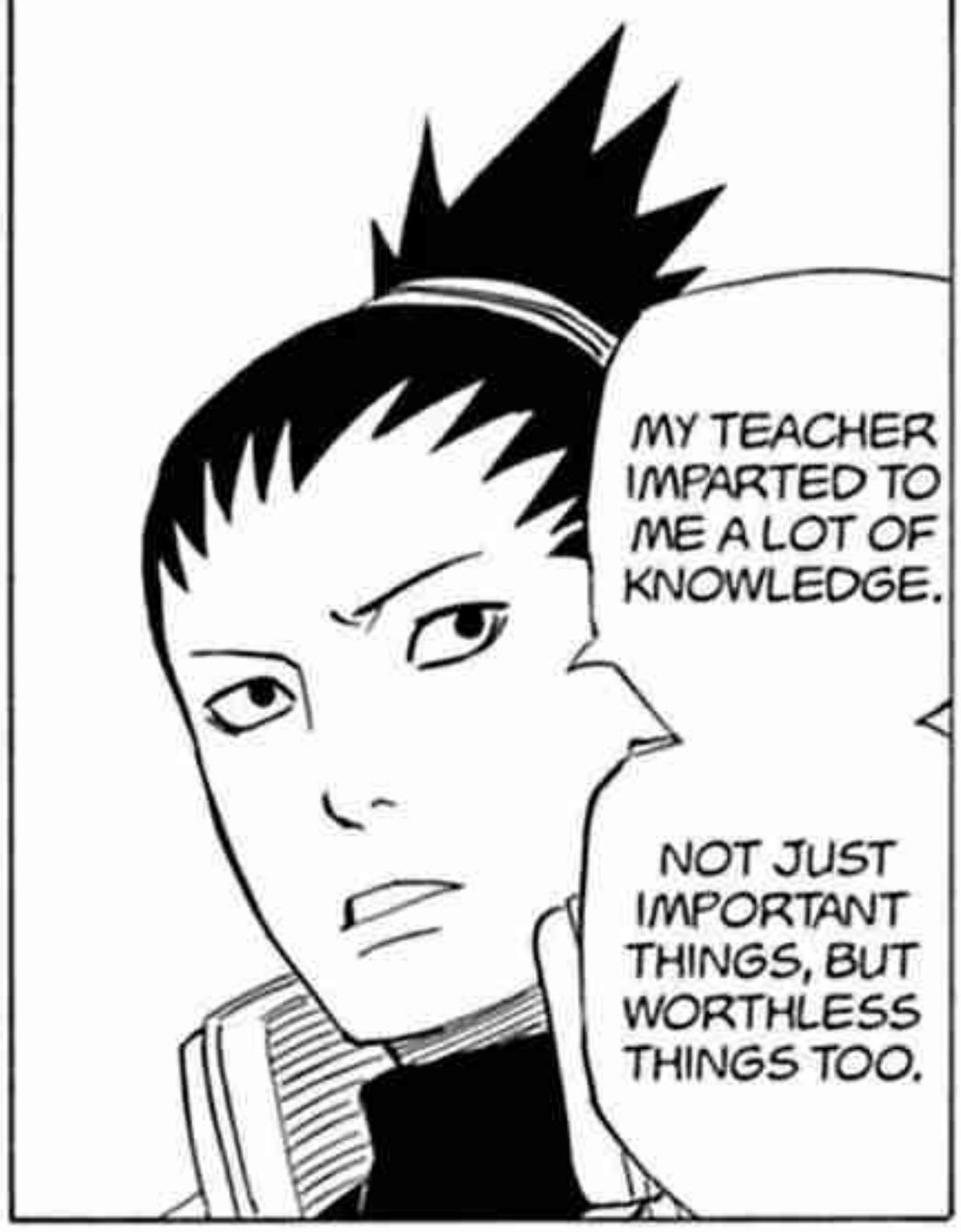
ASUMA ENTRUSTED THAT CHILD TO ME.

HAVING LOST MY TEACHER TOO, I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE GOING THROUGH.

...

I HEARD ABOUT LORD JIRAIYA.

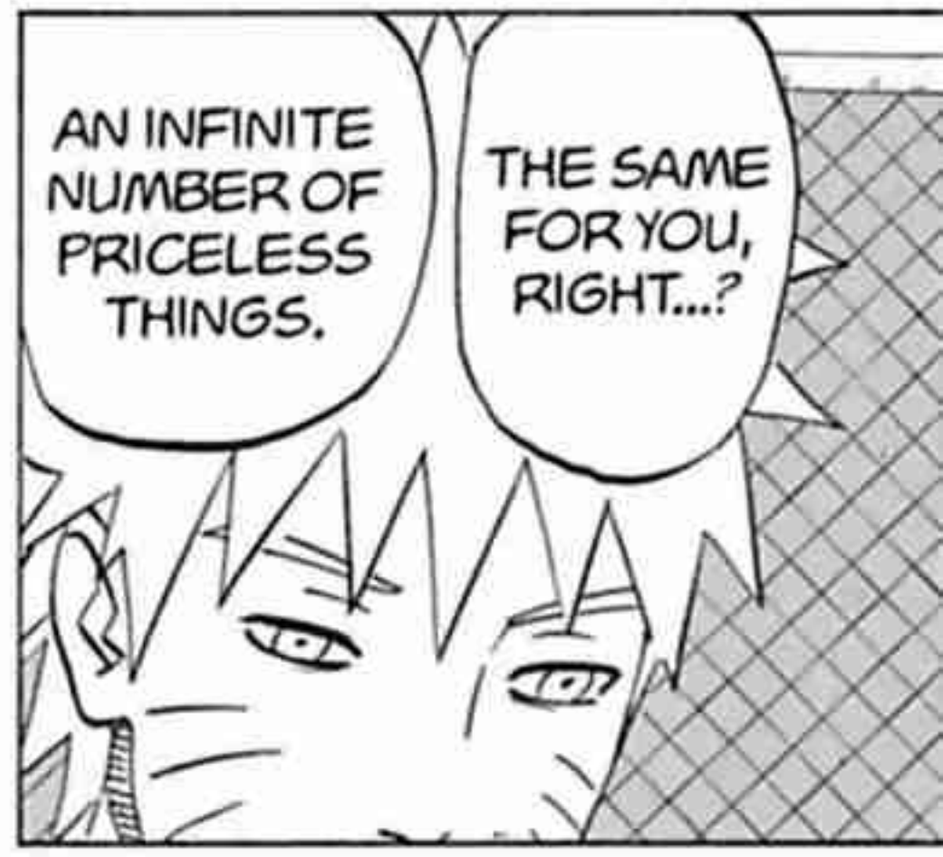
BUT WHINING AND SULKING ISN'T GOING TO MAKE THINGS BETTER.


MY TEACHER IMPARTED TO ME A LOT OF KNOWLEDGE.
NOT JUST IMPORTANT THINGS, BUT WORTHLESS THINGS TOO.

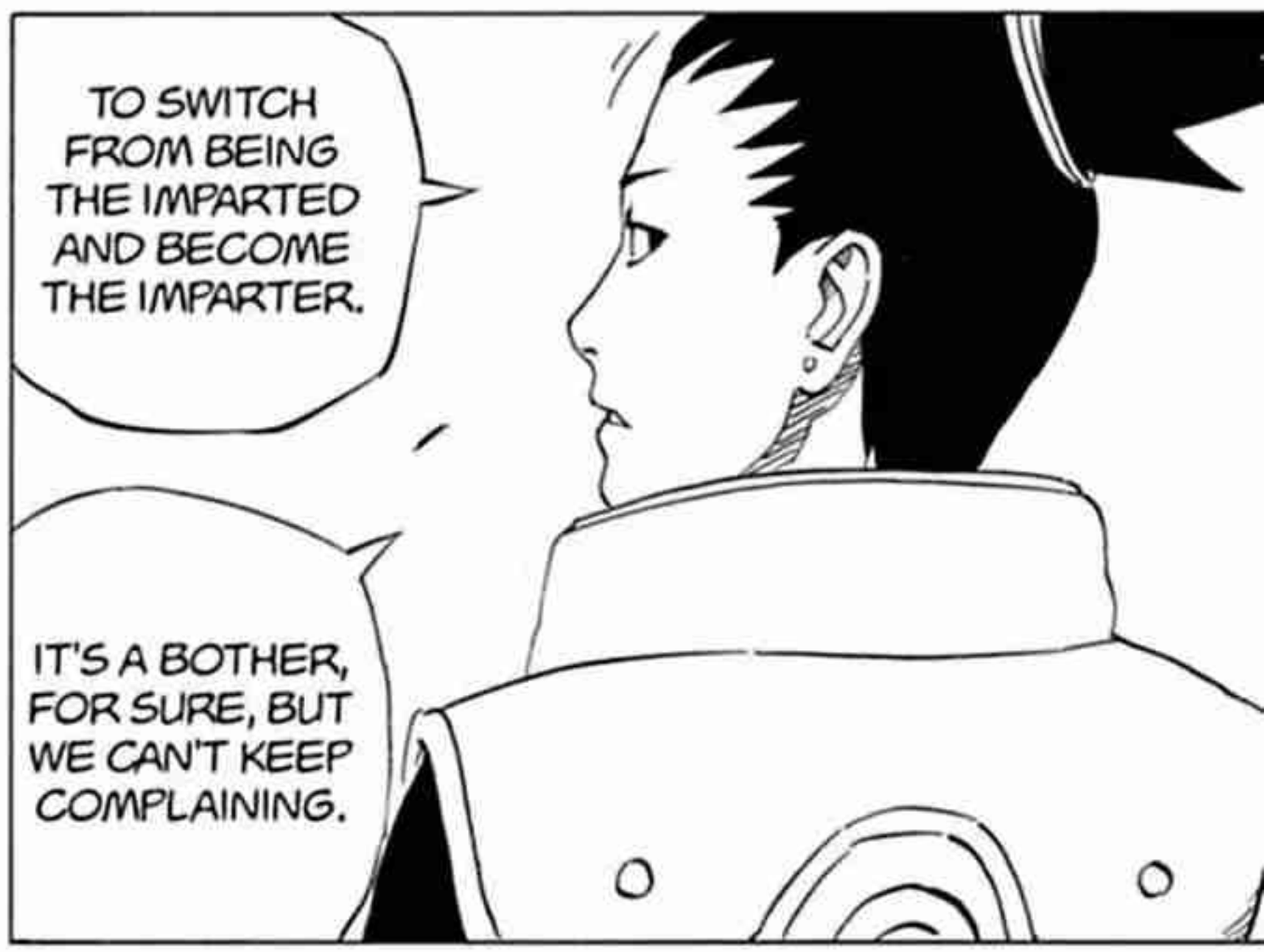
WE NO LONGER HAVE THE LUXURY OF GRIEF.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

FSH

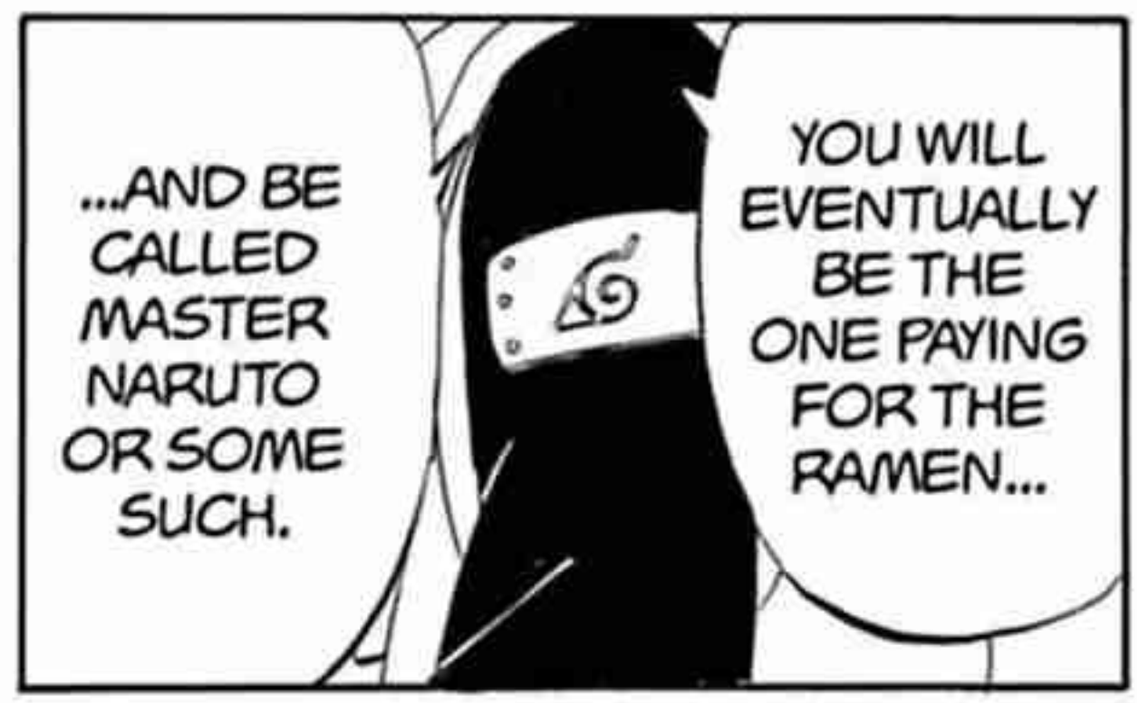
STEP UP TO WHAT?
SO I THINK IT'S ABOUT TIME FOR US TO STEP UP, NO?


AN INFINITE NUMBER OF PRICELESS THINGS.
THE SAME FOR YOU, RIGHT...?

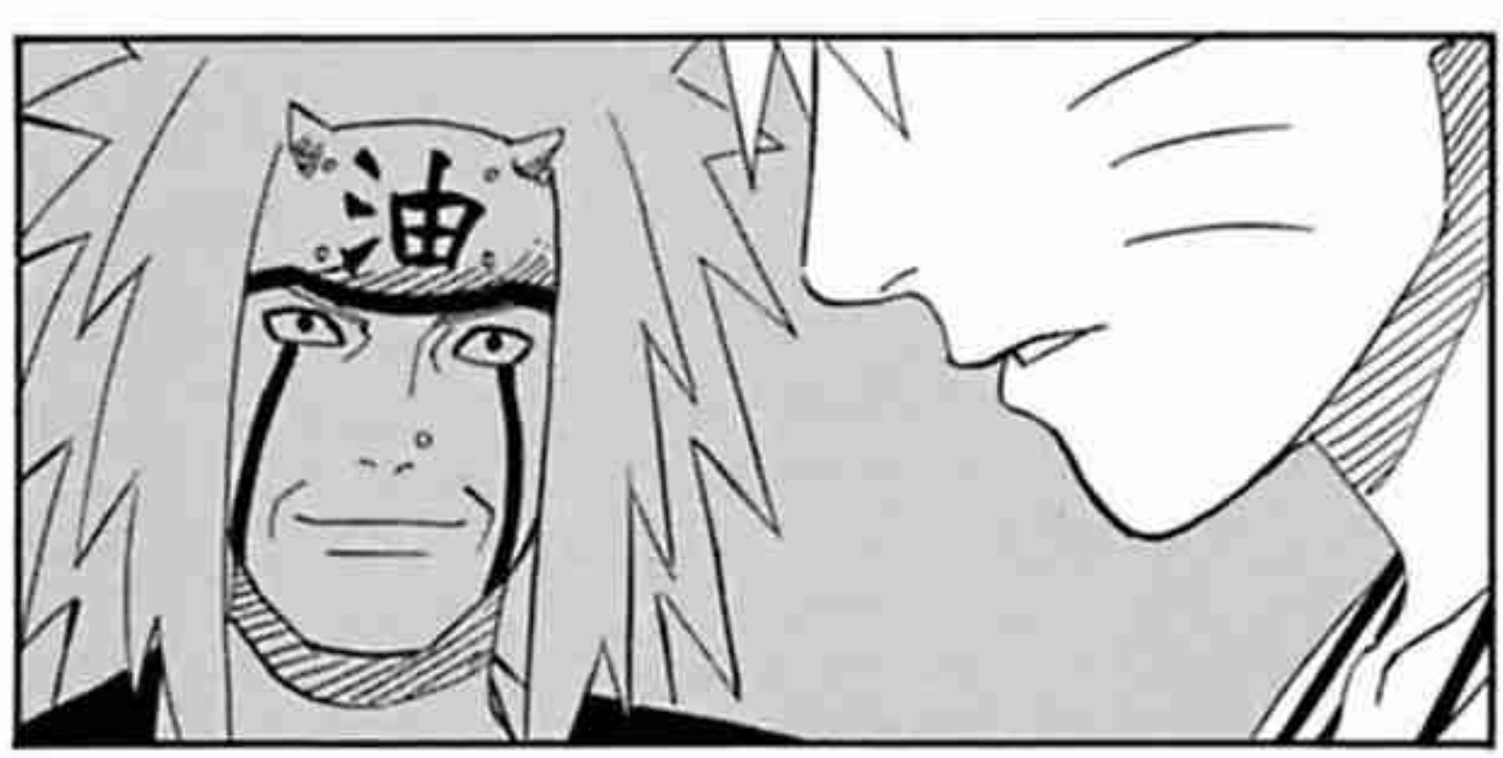
...!

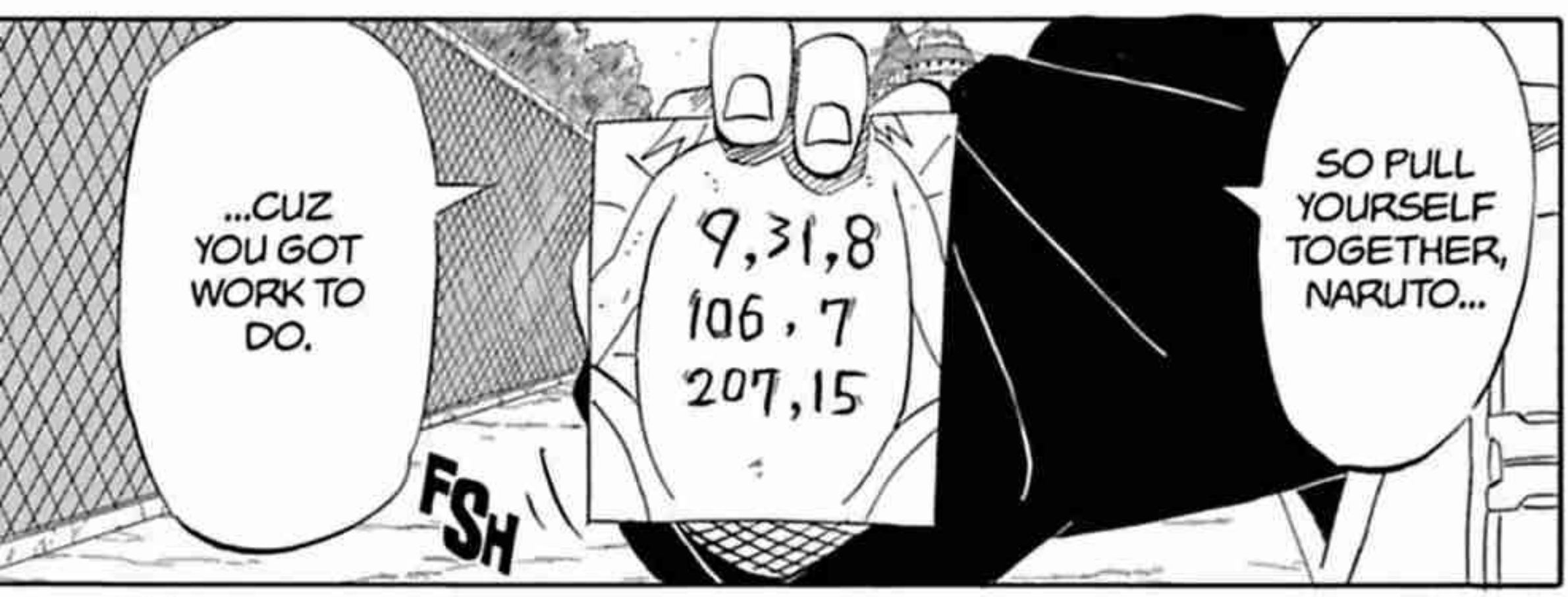

TO SWITCH FROM BEING THE IMPARTED AND BECOME THE IMPARTER.
IT'S A BOTHER, FOR SURE, BUT WE CAN'T KEEP COMPLAINING.

...LIKE ASUMA AND LORD JIRAIYA, THAT IS.
IF WE WANNA BECOME ULTRA-COOL SHINOBI...
TINK


...AND BE CALLED MASTER NARUTO OR SOME SUCH.
YOU WILL EVENTUALLY BE THE ONE PAYING FOR THE RAMEN...

WE CAN'T STAY SNOT-NOSED BRATS FOREVER.

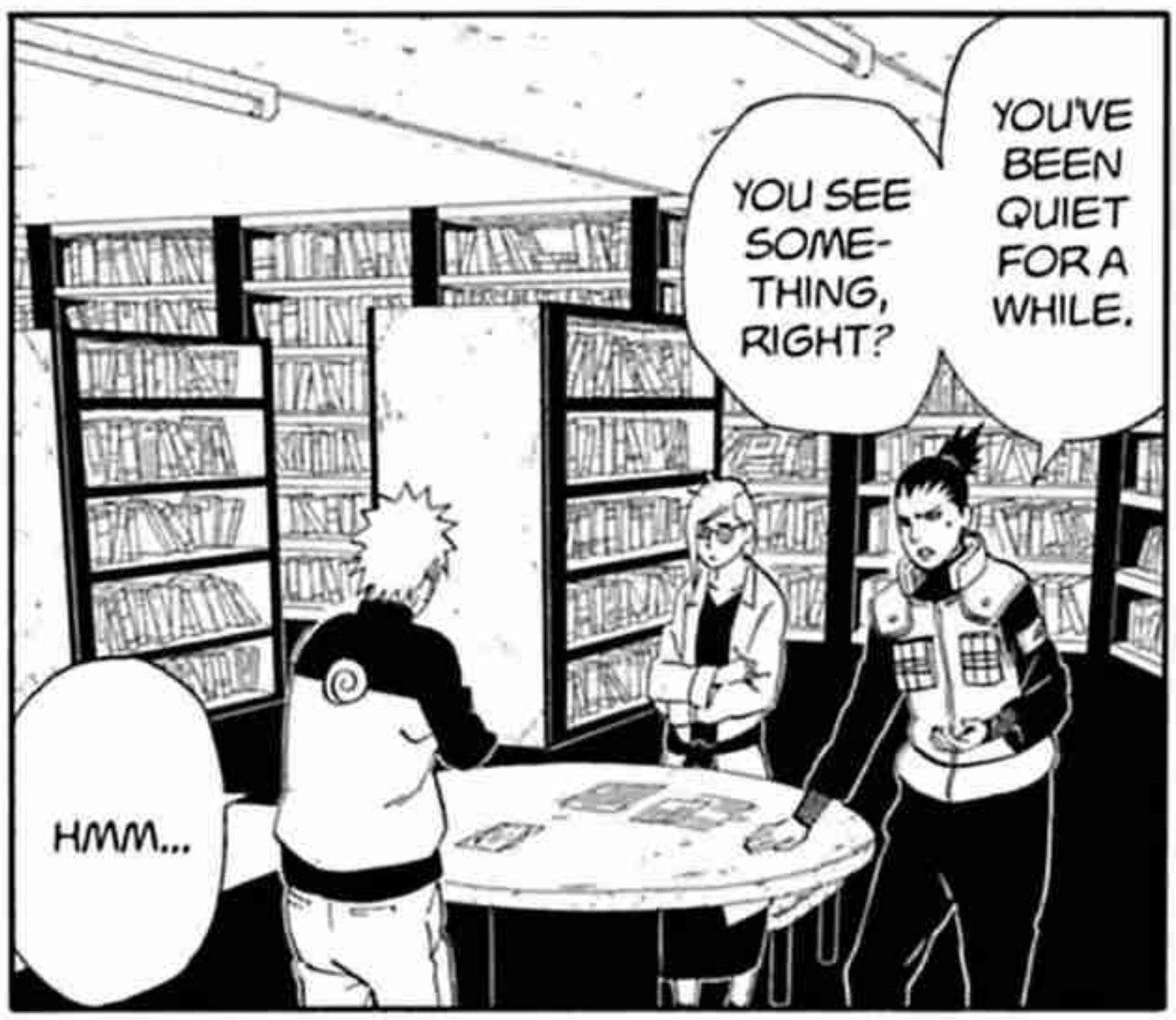


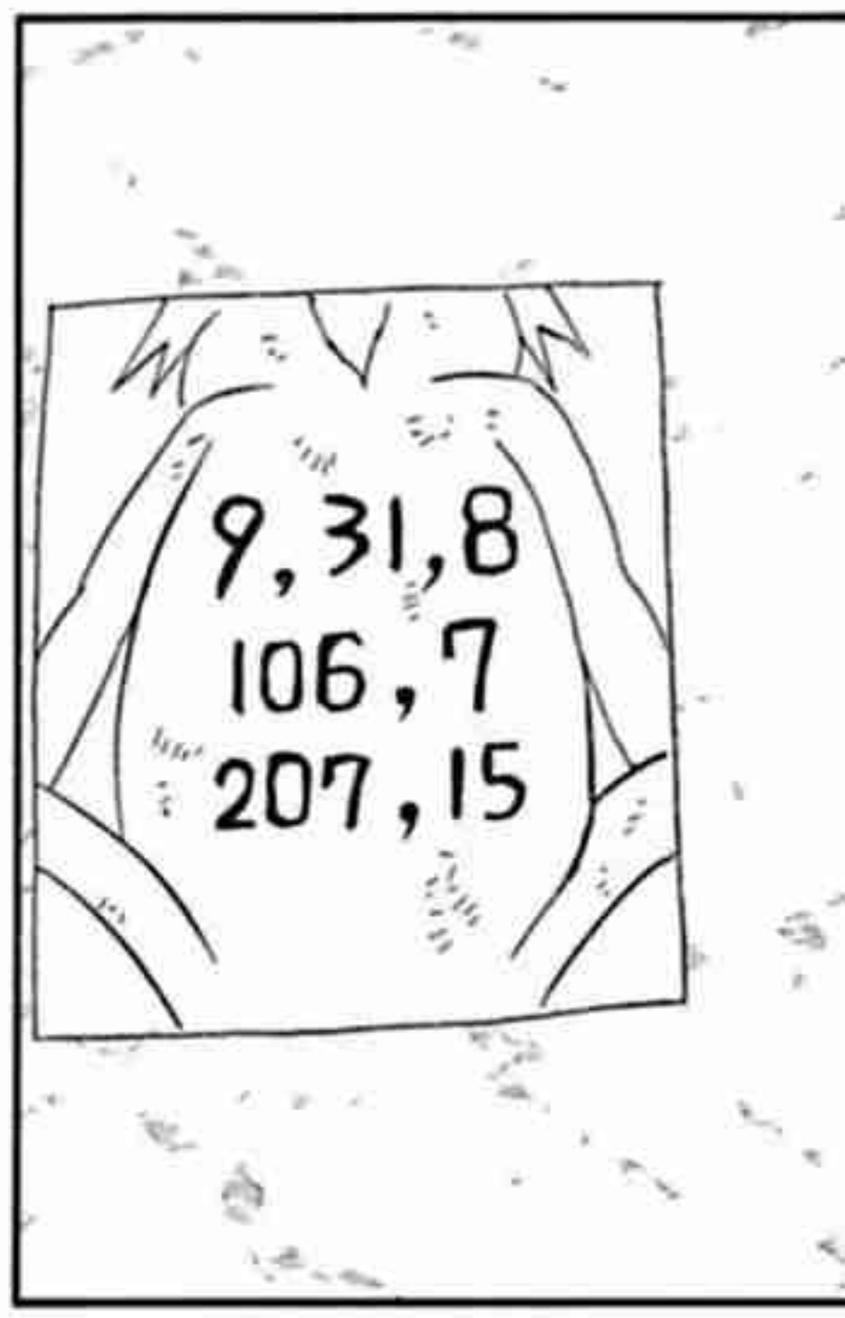

...CUZ YOU GOT WORK TO DO.
FSH
9,31,8
106,7
207,15
SO PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER, NARUTO...

NARUTO

# Number 407: Addressee: Naruto

(Cipher Corps)



THERE IS ONE THING THAT'S BEEN BOTHERING ME SINCE THE BEGINNING...
WHAT IS IT?

WE'RE NOT ASKING YOU TO INSTANTLY DECODE THE MESSAGE.
PLEASE JUST SAY ANYTHING THAT COMES TO YOUR MIND...
THERE'S GOT TO BE SOMETHING THERE.

KATAKANA?
HUH?

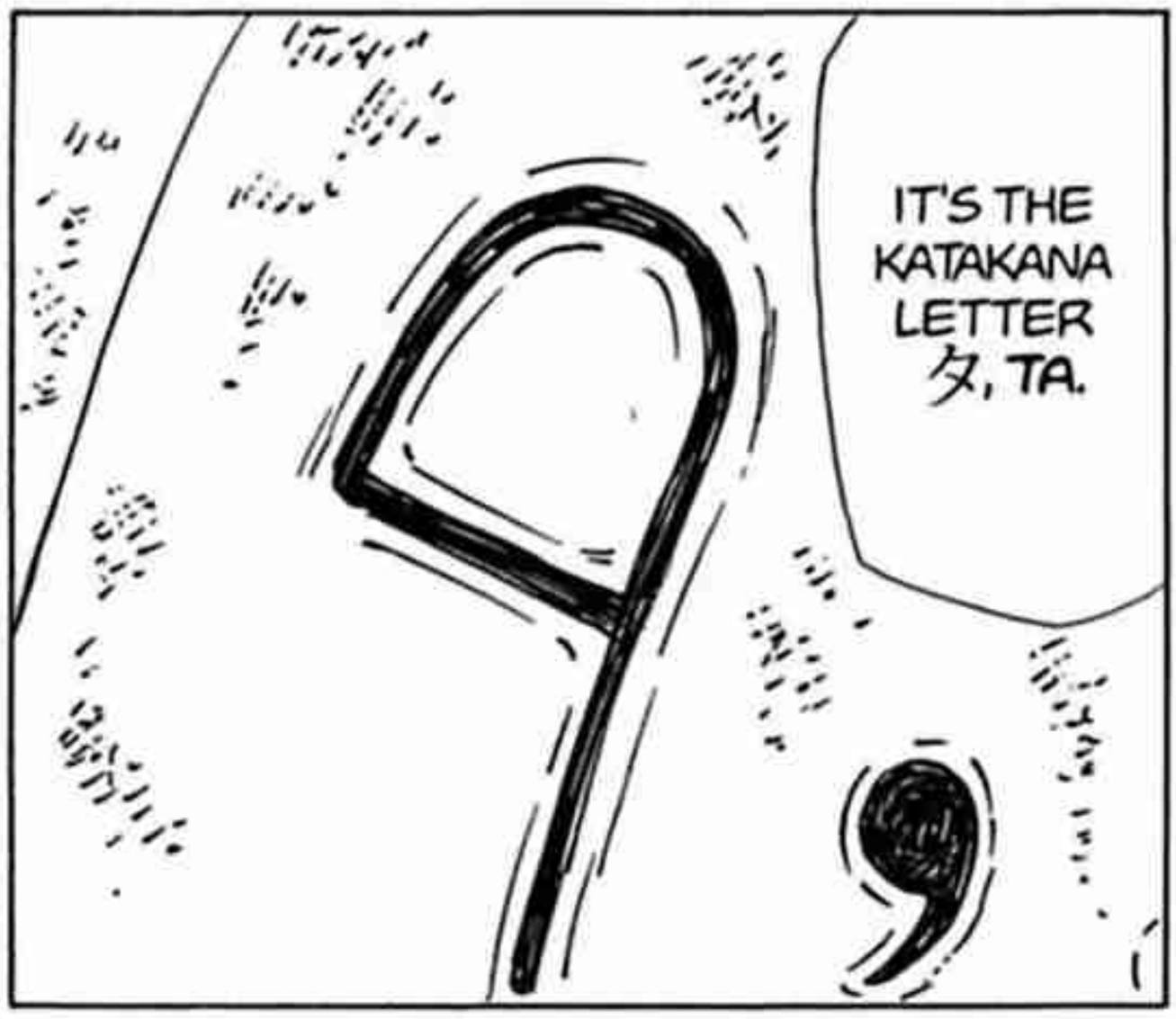
WHY AMONG ALL THESE NUMBERS...
...IS THERE A SINGLE KATAKANA LETTER?

SEE, RIGHT HERE.

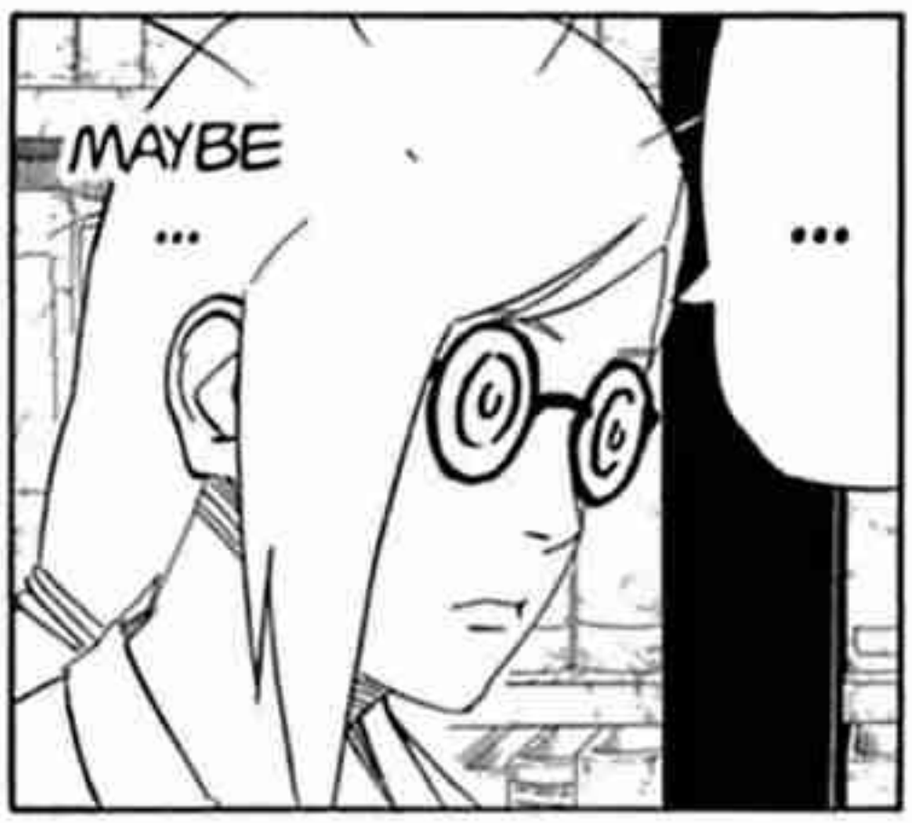
WHERE?!
KLATTER

THAT'S THE NUMBER NINE, ISN'T IT?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT ?

9,31,8
20,


IT'S THE KATAKANA LETTER タ, TA.

THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT AT FIRST TOO...
...BUT IT'S NOT THE NUMBER NINE.


MAYBE ...
...

HMM... NOW I KINDA SEE IT, BUT IT'S STILL A STRETCH.
HUH...

AND SINCE I WAS TRAVELING WITH HIM, HE WOULD ALWAYS MAKE ME READ HIS HANDWRITTEN DRAFTS.
WELL, THE WHOLE TIME WE WERE TRAINING, PERVY SAGE WAS WRITING A BOOK...
...I MEAN, HE IS AN AUTHOR.

...WHAT MAKES YOU THINK THIS NINE IS THE LETTER 夕?
NARUTO ...

...CUZ IT'D LOOK LIKE THE NUMBER NINE...
...THAT'S WHAT MADE ME THINK OF IT.
ANYWAY, EACH TIME HE USED 夕, I'D STUMBLE OVER THE WORD.

EVEN THOUGH THEY WERE SUPER BORING...
HE'D WANT ME TO REVIEW THEM.

PENMANSHIP QUIRK, HUH...

SCRITCH
SCRITCH
LIKE SO...

I SEE... IT'S A PEN-MANSHIP QUIRK!

AND HIS SECOND STROKE WAS ROUNDED...

1 2 3

普通

(Most folks)

1 2 3

自来也様

(Lord Jiraiya)

WHEN LORD JIRAIYA WROTE THE LETTER 夕...

...HE HAD A HABIT OF DRAWING THE FIRST STROKE SHORTER THAN MOST, AND STARTED THE THIRD STROKE FROM THE TIP INSTEAD OF THE MIDDLE OF THE FIRST STROKE.

9,31,8
106,7
207,15

...RESULTING IN HIS 夕 LOOKING LIKE A NINE.

1 2 3

自来也様

SQUIK

WHY DIDN'T YOU MENTION SUCH AN IMPORTANT THING SOONER?

CUZ JUST CUZ WE KNOW IT'S A TA DOESN'T MAKE THE REST ANY CLEARER!

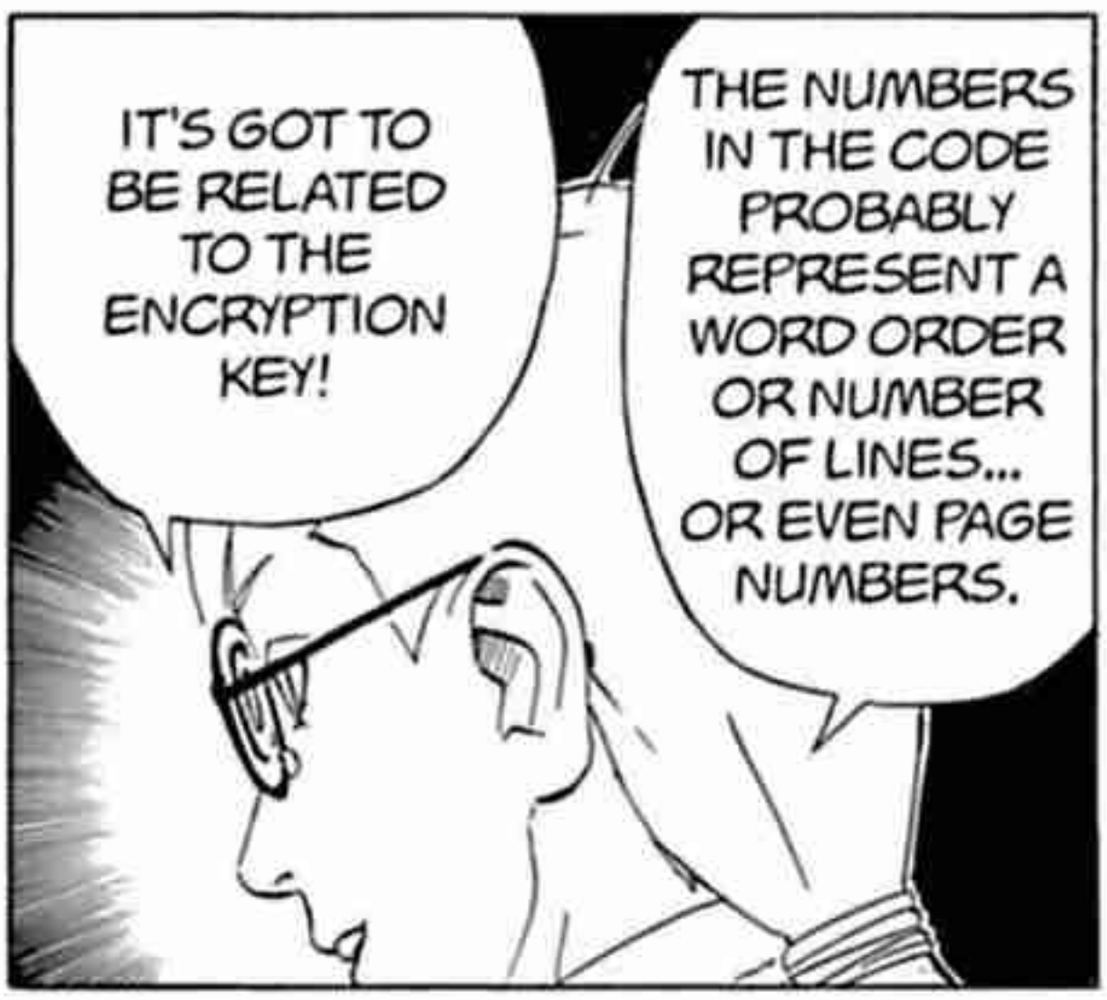
SO THAT WAS THE COMMON LINK...

KLIK...

...BETWEEN LORD JIRAIYA AND NARUTO!

NO, THAT'S NOT TRUE.
IT'S GOT TO BE THAT BOOK YOU MENTIONED, OR SOME SUCH!

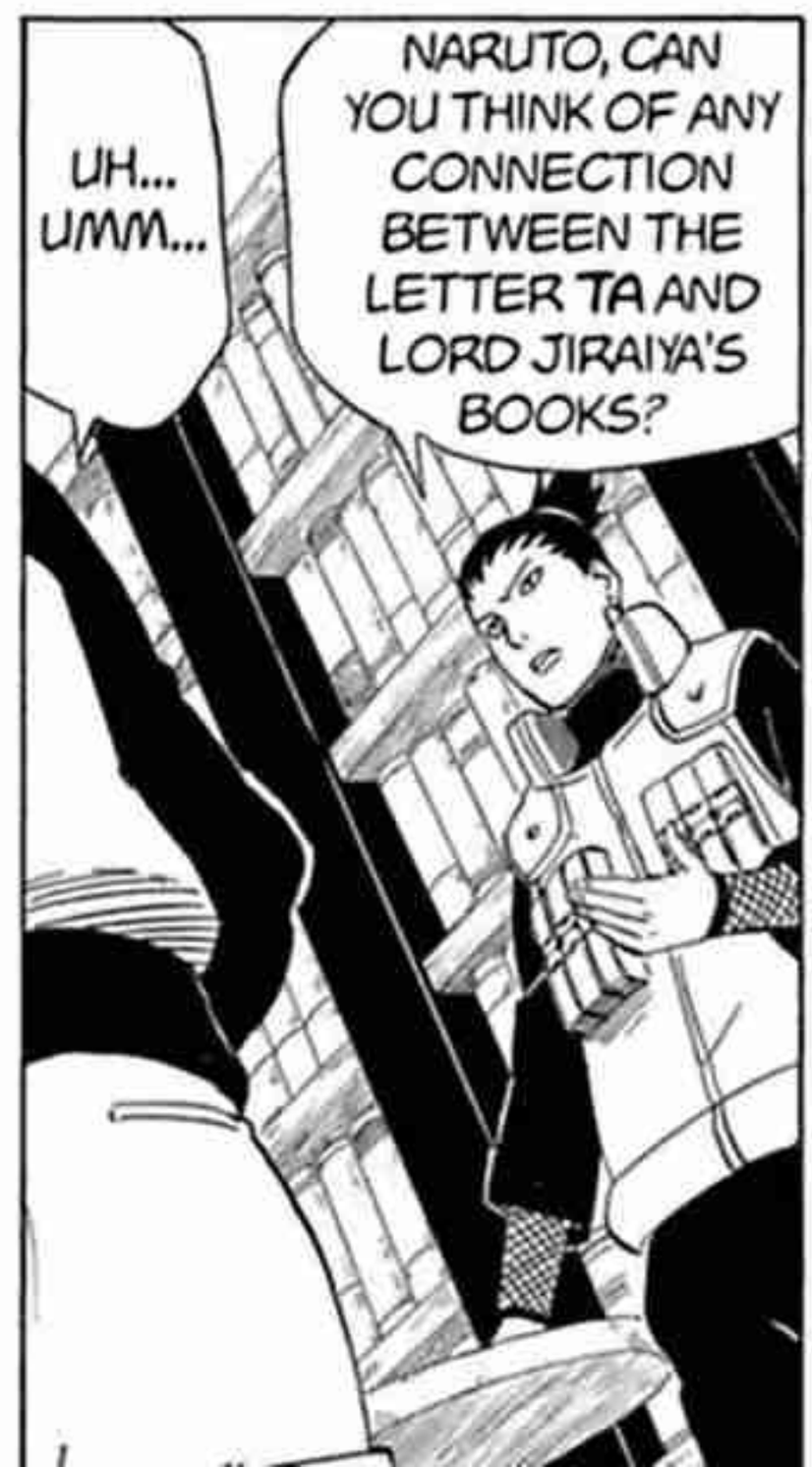
...


IT'S GOT TO BE RELATED TO THE ENCRYPTION KEY!
THE NUMBERS IN THE CODE PROBABLY REPRESENT A WORD ORDER OR NUMBER OF LINES... OR EVEN PAGE NUMBERS.

I BELIEVE MORE CLUES MUST BE HIDDEN INSIDE LORD JIRAIYA'S BOOKS TOO!
TH-THAT'S RIGHT, SHIKA-MARU!

THEN LET'S JUST CHECK ALL OF THEM.

OH...!
OKAY, HOW MANY BOOKS DID LORD JIRAIYA PUBLISH?
I'M NOT SURE, BUT I THINK FOUR OR FIVE...?


UH... UMM...
NARUTO, CAN YOU THINK OF ANY CONNECTION BETWEEN THE LETTER TA AND LORD JIRAIYA'S BOOKS?

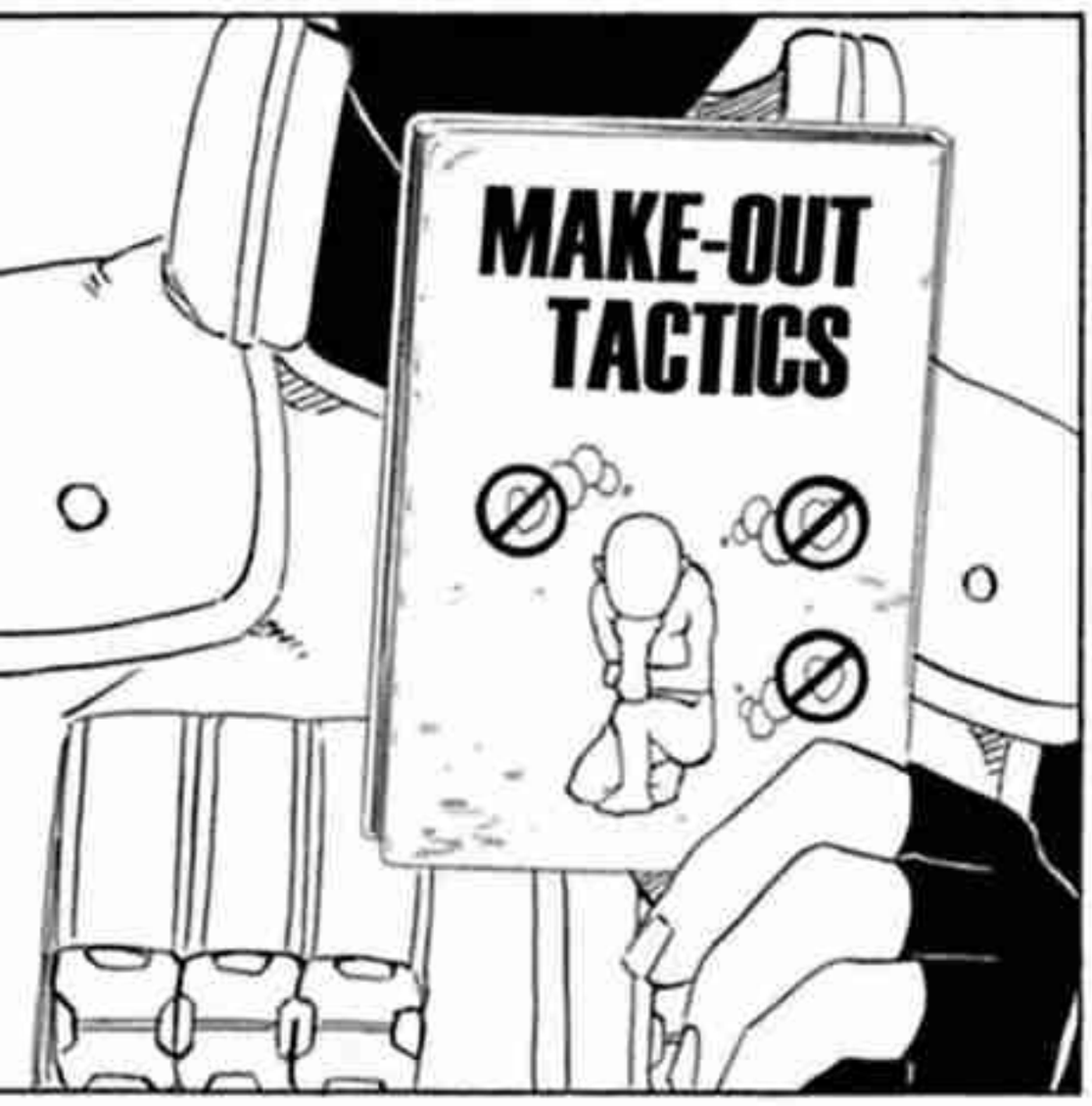
MAKE-OUT TACTICS

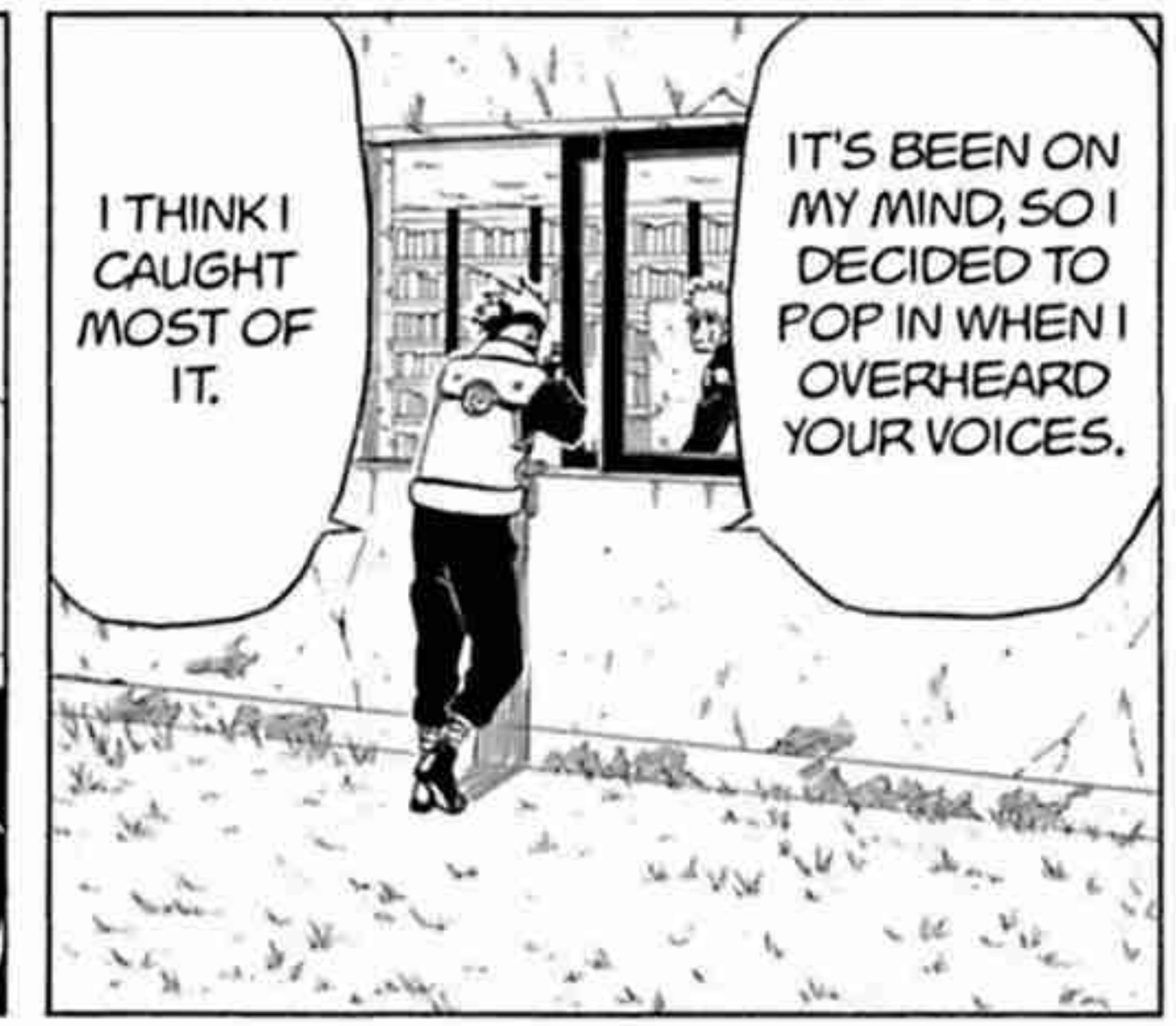
TAC

SHOOF
MAKE-OUT TACTICS
I THINK IT'S THIS ONE.

MASTER KAKASHI!
TA FOR TACTICS!

MAKE-OUT TACTICS ...

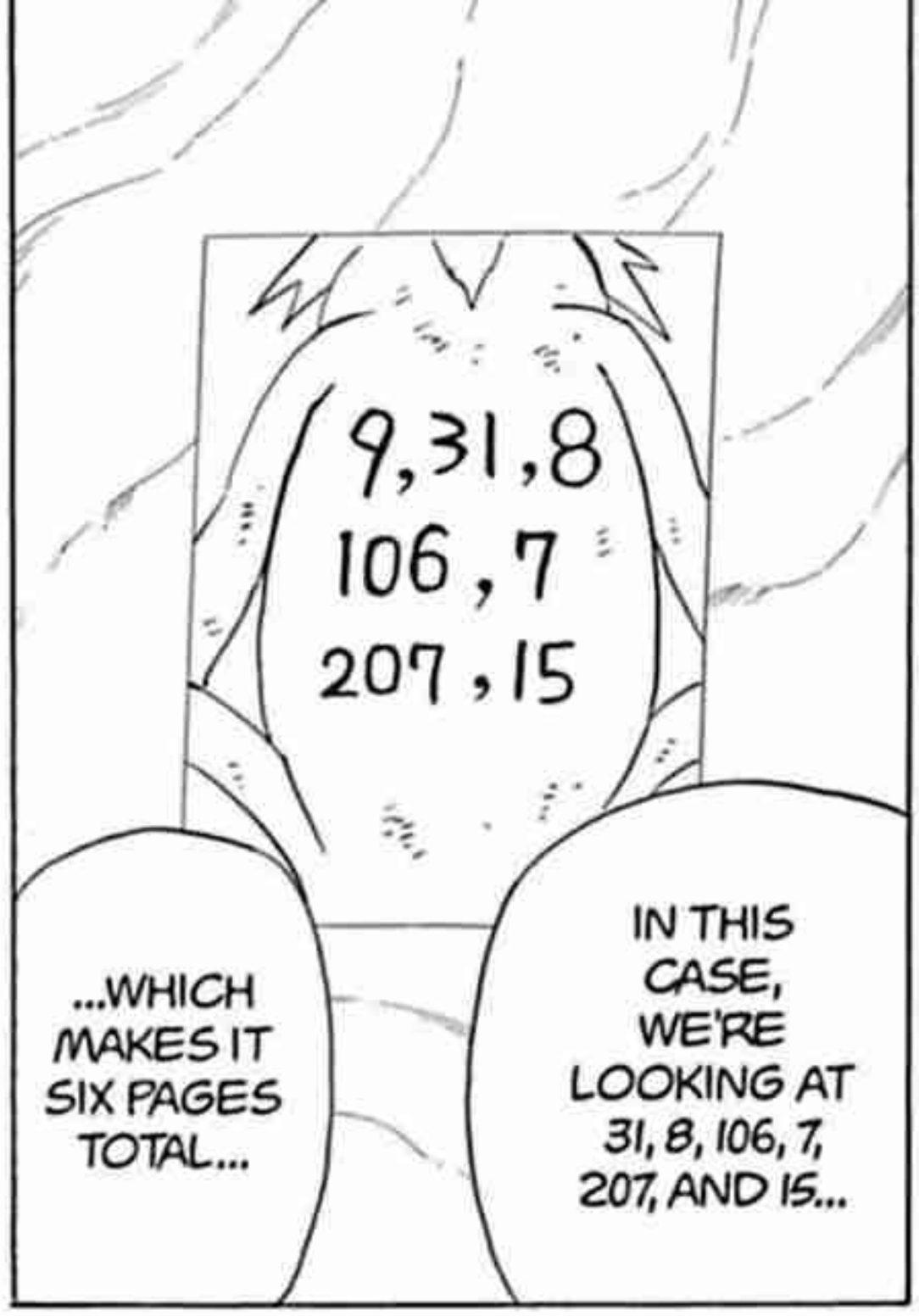

MAKE-OUT TACTICS


I THINK I CAUGHT MOST OF IT.
IT'S BEEN ON MY MIND, SO I DECIDED TO POP IN WHEN I OVERHEARD YOUR VOICES.

JUST AS I THOUGHT, LORD JIRAIYA DID PASS ON THE KEY TO NARUTO.
IT'S SOMETHING ONLY NARUTO WOULD HAVE KNOWN.

THAT'S...
...THE SAME BOOK PERVY SAGE WAS WORKING ON DURING OUR TRAINING!

MAKE-OUT TACTICS
SO THE FIRST PART OF THE CODE, TA...
...POINTS TO TACTICS, ONE OF SEVERAL VOLUMES OF THE MAKE-OUT SERIES.


9,31,8
106,7
207,15
...WHICH MAKES IT SIX PAGES TOTAL...
IN THIS CASE, WE'RE LOOKING AT 31, 8, 106, 7, 207, AND 15...

...THE FIRST LINE OF INVESTIGATION IS ALWAYS PAGE NUMBERS.
WE CAN LOOK AT WORD AND LINE ORDER, BUT WHEN A CODE INVOLVES A BOOK...

HERE WE GO.
NOW WHAT?

PAGE 31, RIGHT?
FRRLLP FRRLLP
MAKE-OUT TACTICS

FLIP TO THAT PAGE, PLEASE.
LET'S START WITH PAGE 31.

PLEASE READ THE SENTENCE OUT LOUD.
FIRST, WE LOOK AT WHAT THE FIRST LETTER OR WORD ON THAT PAGE IS.

READ THIS WAY
本当に愛してる？その
だから、私はその証拠
暗くなってからなん
さあ早く私の所へ、
これ一度っきりで
おれはなんでもす
君のホルモンが、
一時間は誰も入
ても君の
EH...?!
UH... ER...
WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?!
JUST HURRY UP AND READ IT, WILL YA?!
暗号部
AH...ALL RIGHT...

P31 本当に愛してる

P8 物々交換と同じだ、それでも君

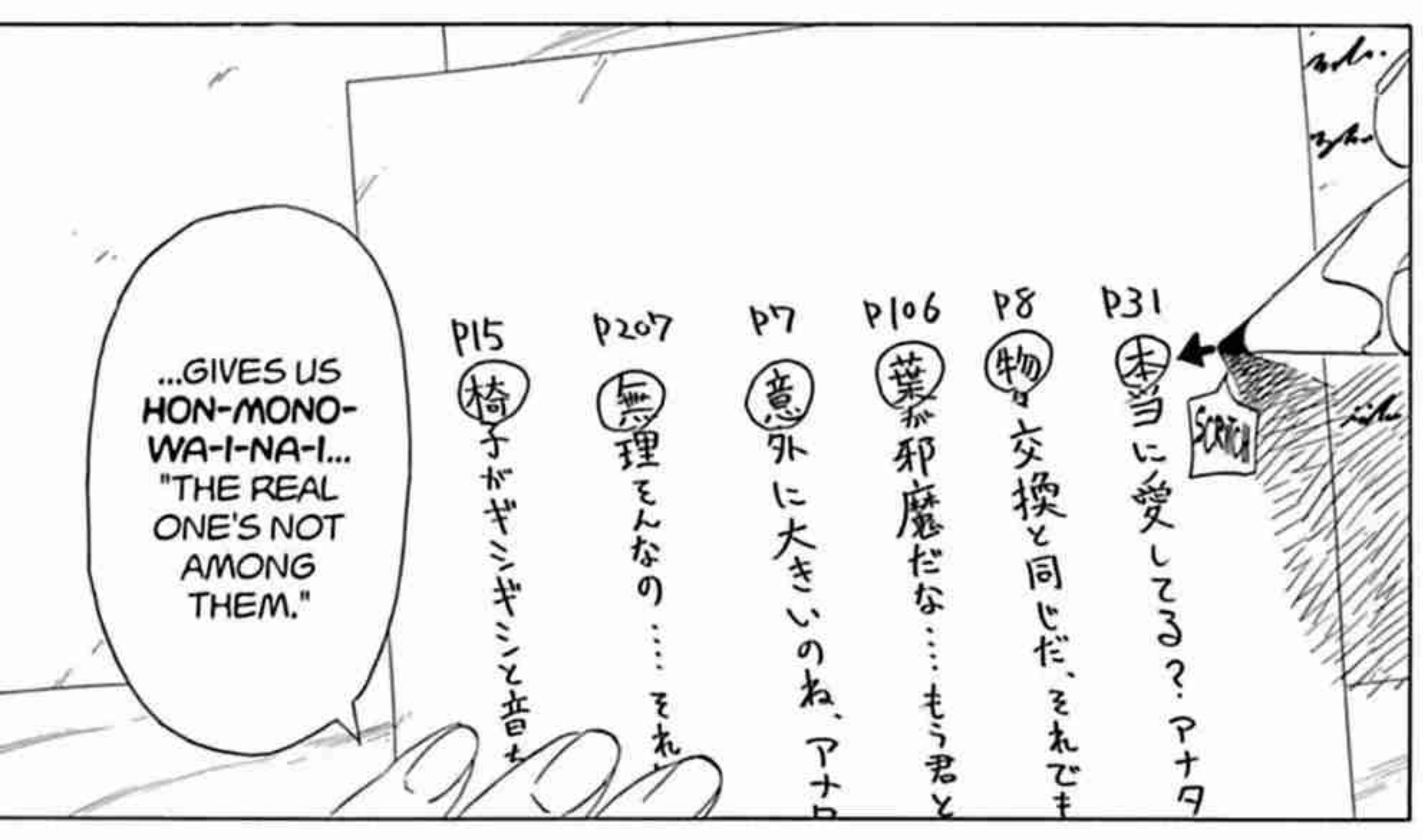
P106 葉が邪魔だな……もう君という

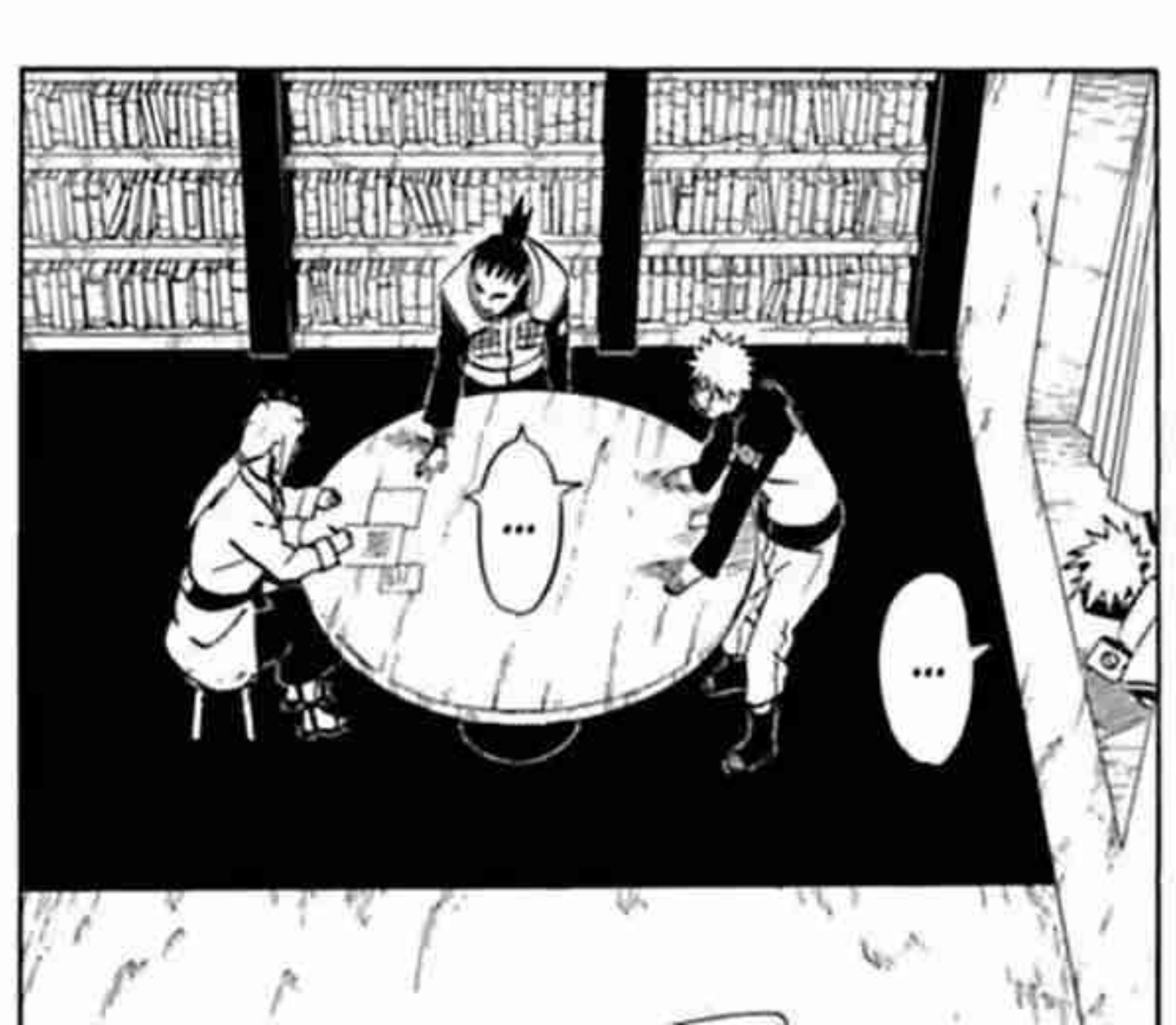
P7 意外に大きいのね、アナタのそ

P207 無理そんなの……それじゃ私の

P15 椅子がギシギシと音を立て、い

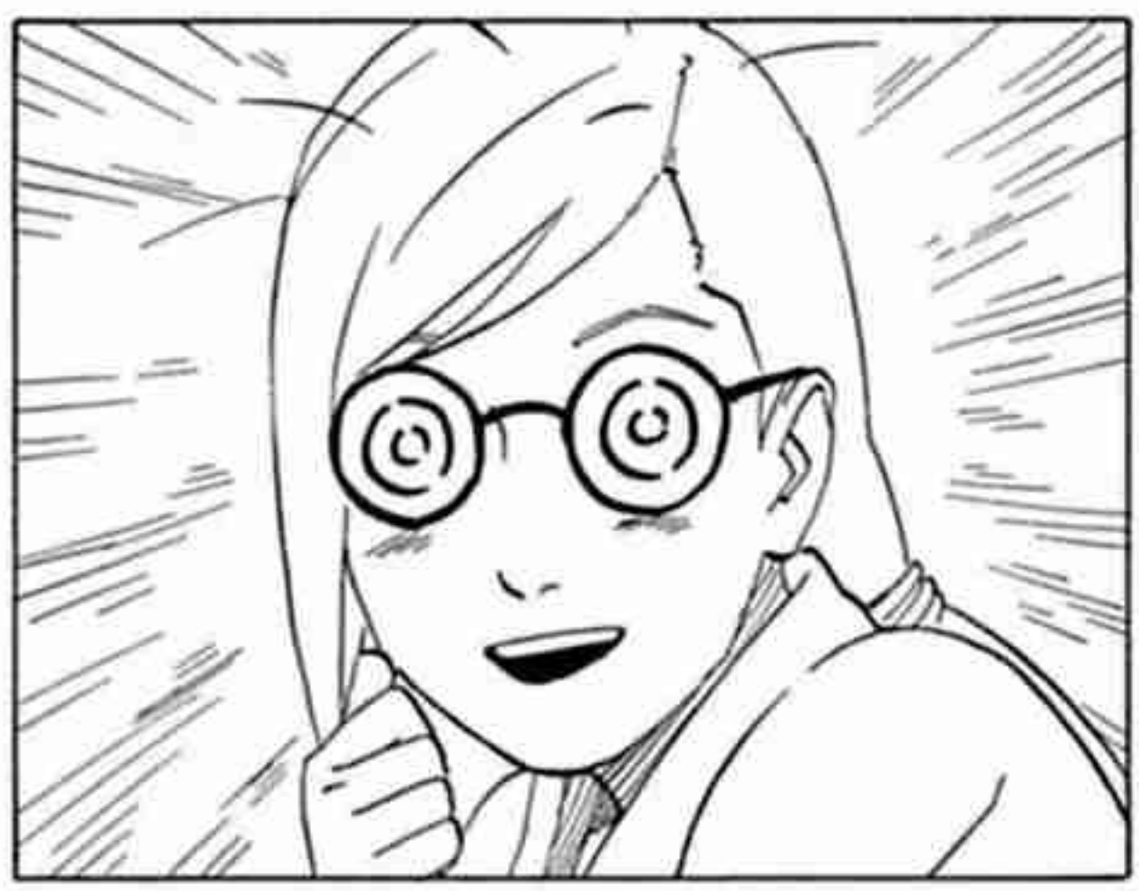
READ THIS WAY





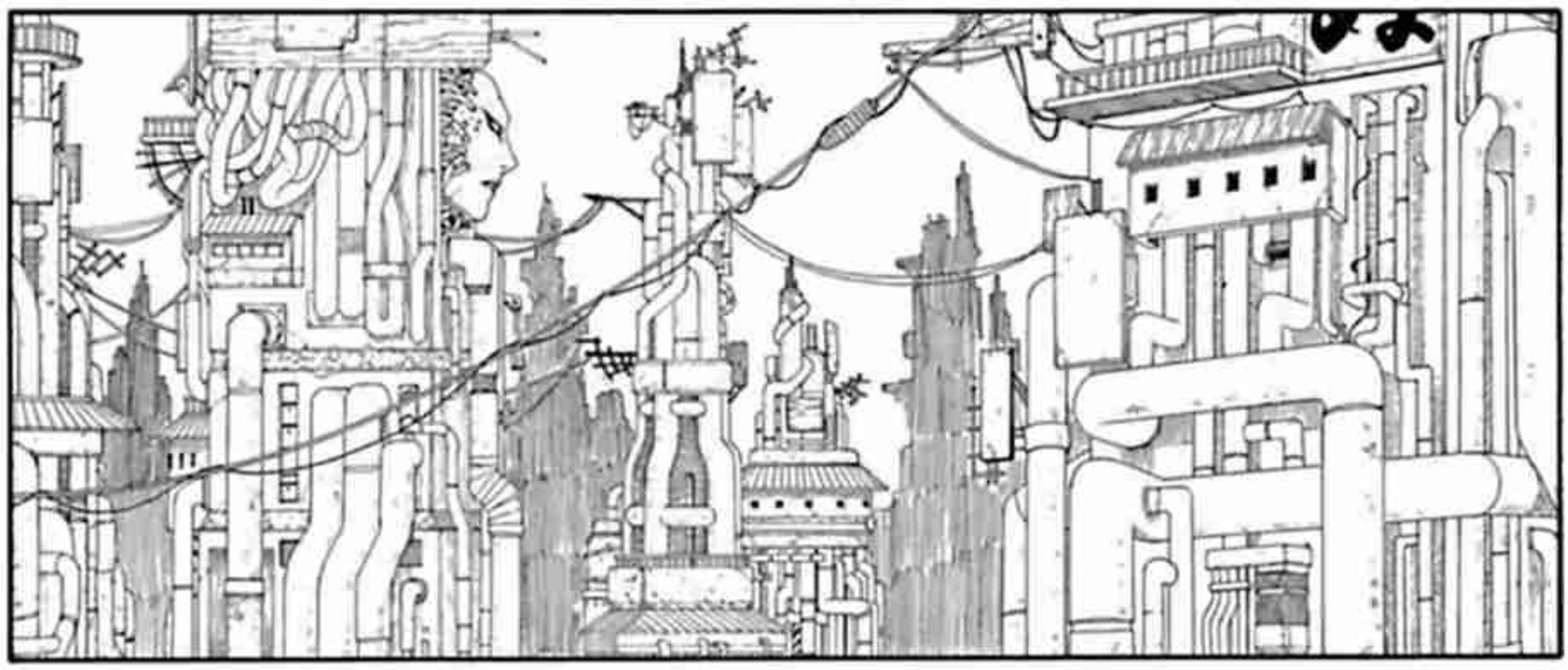
SO WE ASK LADY FIFTH TO SUMMON THIS LORD FUKASAKU, RIGHT?

PERHAPS IT WILL MEAN SOMETHING TO HIM, SINCE HE FOUGHT PAIN TOO.
WE OUGHT TO RELAY THIS TO LORD FUKASAKU RIGHT AWAY.



SURE, THAT'D BE GREAT, SHIHO.
KATOK
MAY I COME ALONG TOO?

ALL RIGHT!
LET'S GO LET GRANNY KNOW!



WE HAD AN UN-EXPECTED INQUISITOR.
YOU SEEM TO BE STRUGGLING.

FSH

WE CAN GO RIGHT NOW TO HUNT DOWN NINE TAILS.
BUT WE TOOK CARE OF HIM.

...MEANS JIRAIYA MUST HAVE LIVED UP TO HIS REPUTA-TION.
FOR UNSTOPPABLE, ALL-KNOWING PAIN TO HAVE HAD THEIR HANDS FULL...

NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS, WE **WILL** CAPTURE NINE TAILS.

PAIN IS INVINCIBLE ...

THE MORE TIME PASSES, THE MORE LIKELY THEY'LL SET SOME PLAN IN MOTION...

...SO GO NOW, BEFORE IT BECOMES DIFFICULT.

BECAUSE YOU VANQUISHED JIRAIYA, KONOHA WILL SET THEIR EYES ON YOU.

SHUP...

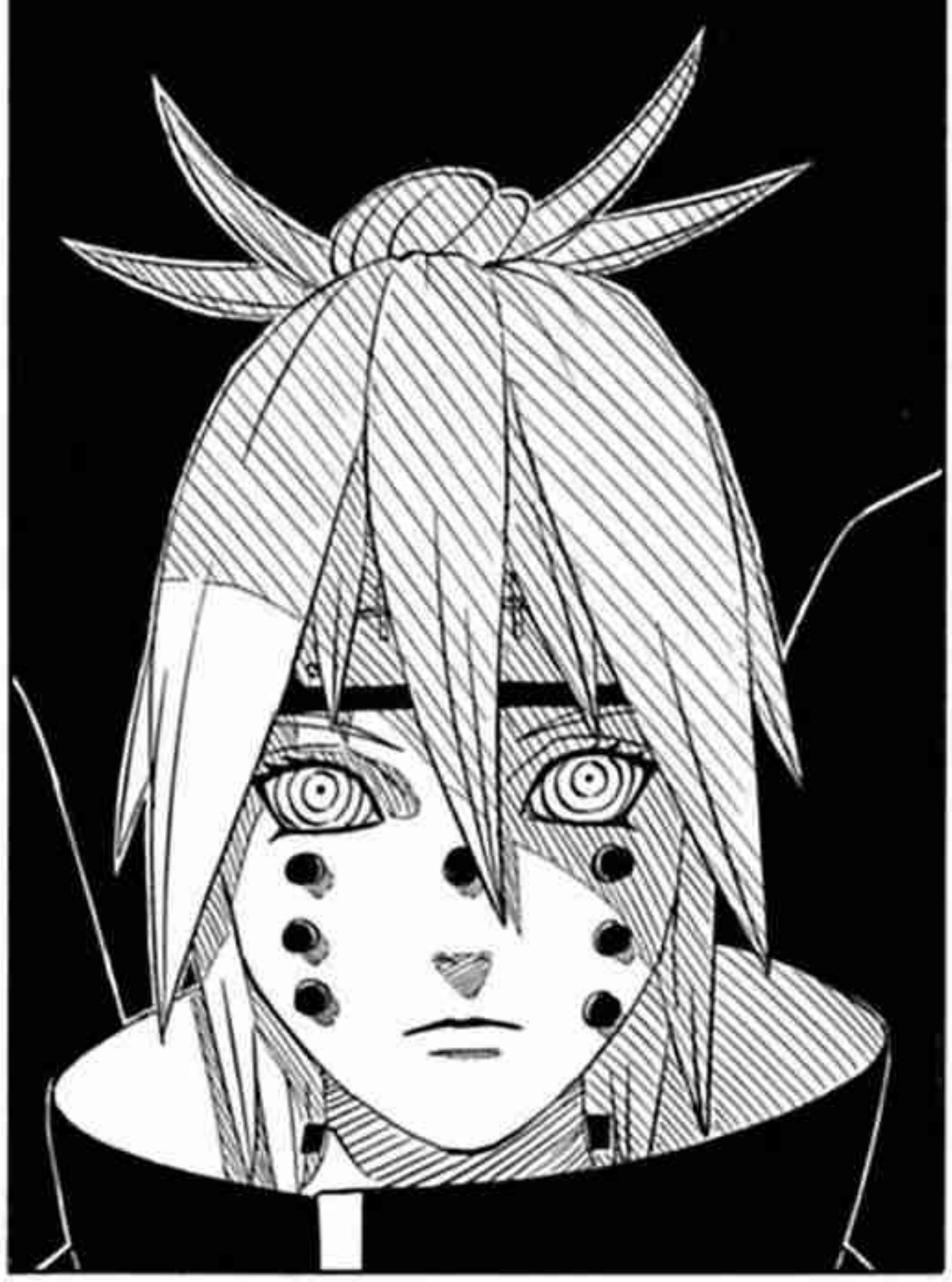
ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THAT?

I HAVE SENT SASUKE AFTER EIGHT TAILS.

...THERE ARE ONLY TWO TAILED BEASTS LEFT.

FSH

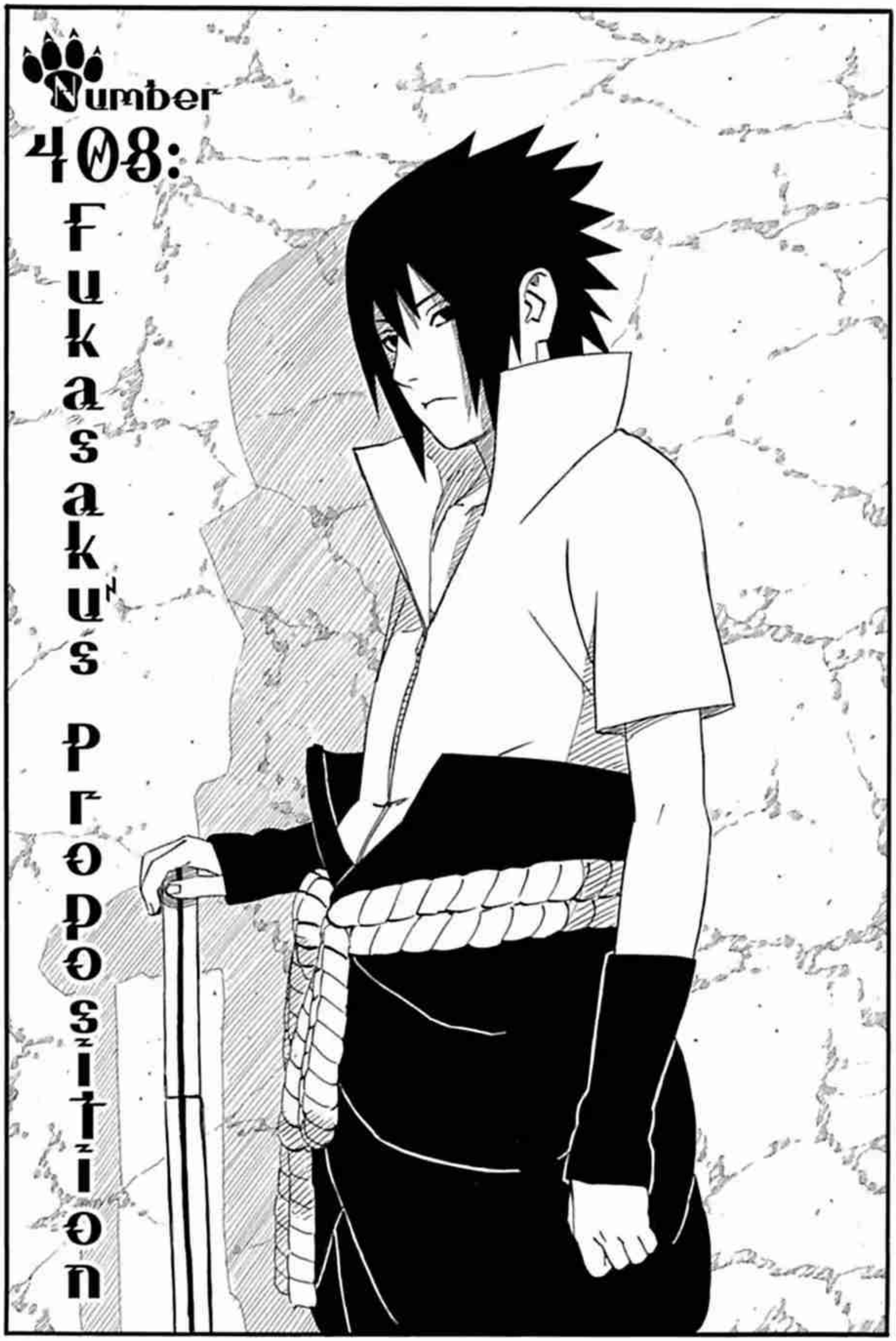
I WILL VOUCH FOR SASUKE.



KONAN, GET THINGS READY...
SHUP

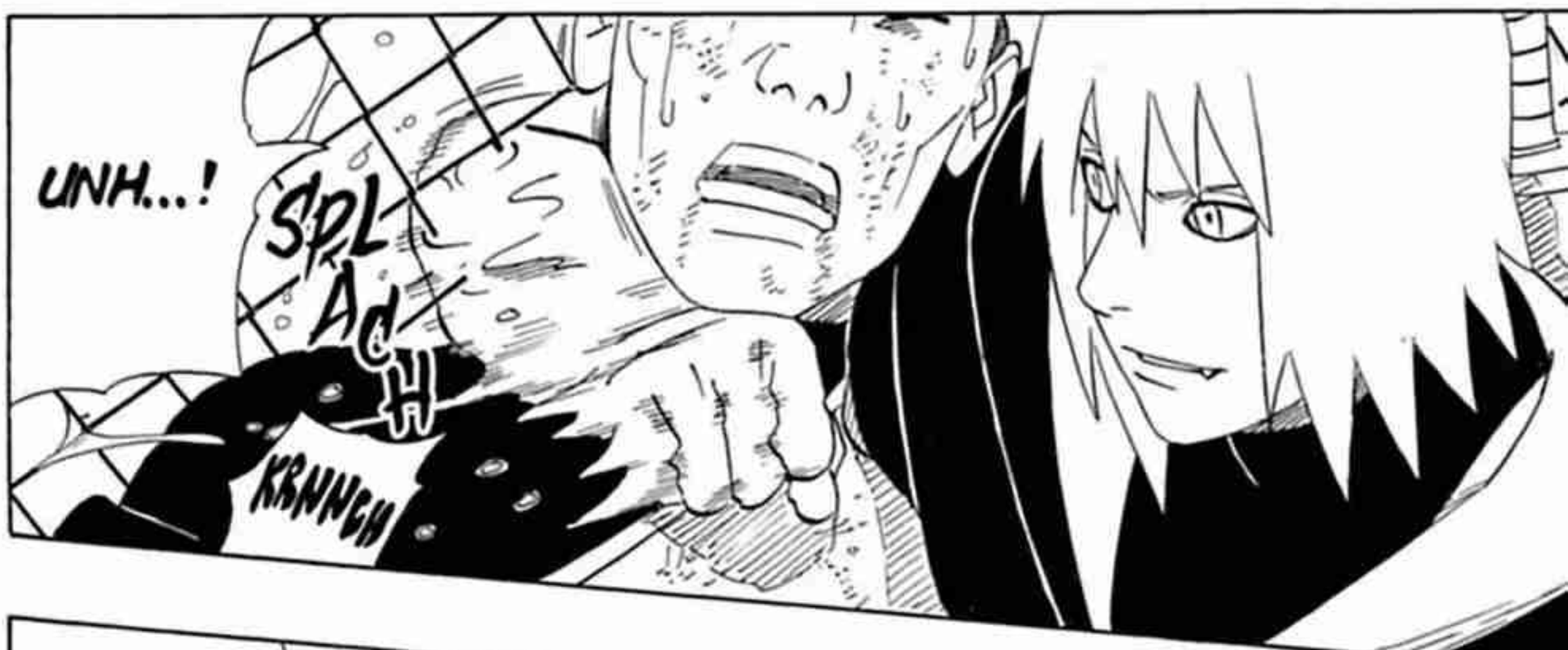
...WE'RE HEADING OUT TO KONOHA.

MAKE-OUT
TACTICS

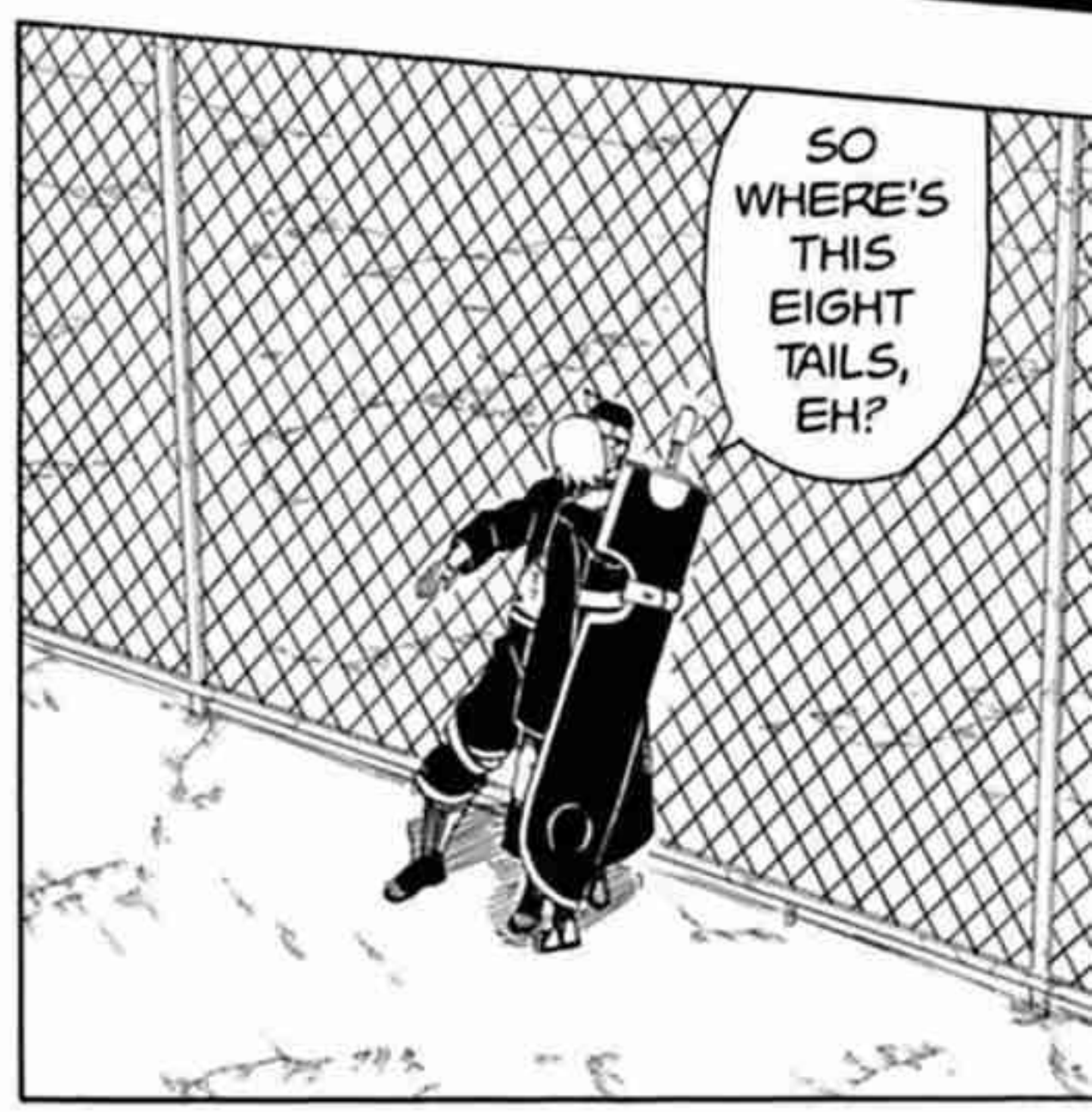

Number
408:
Fukasaku's
Prodigious
Ninjutsu

ZWOP
?!

KA SHING
UGH!!

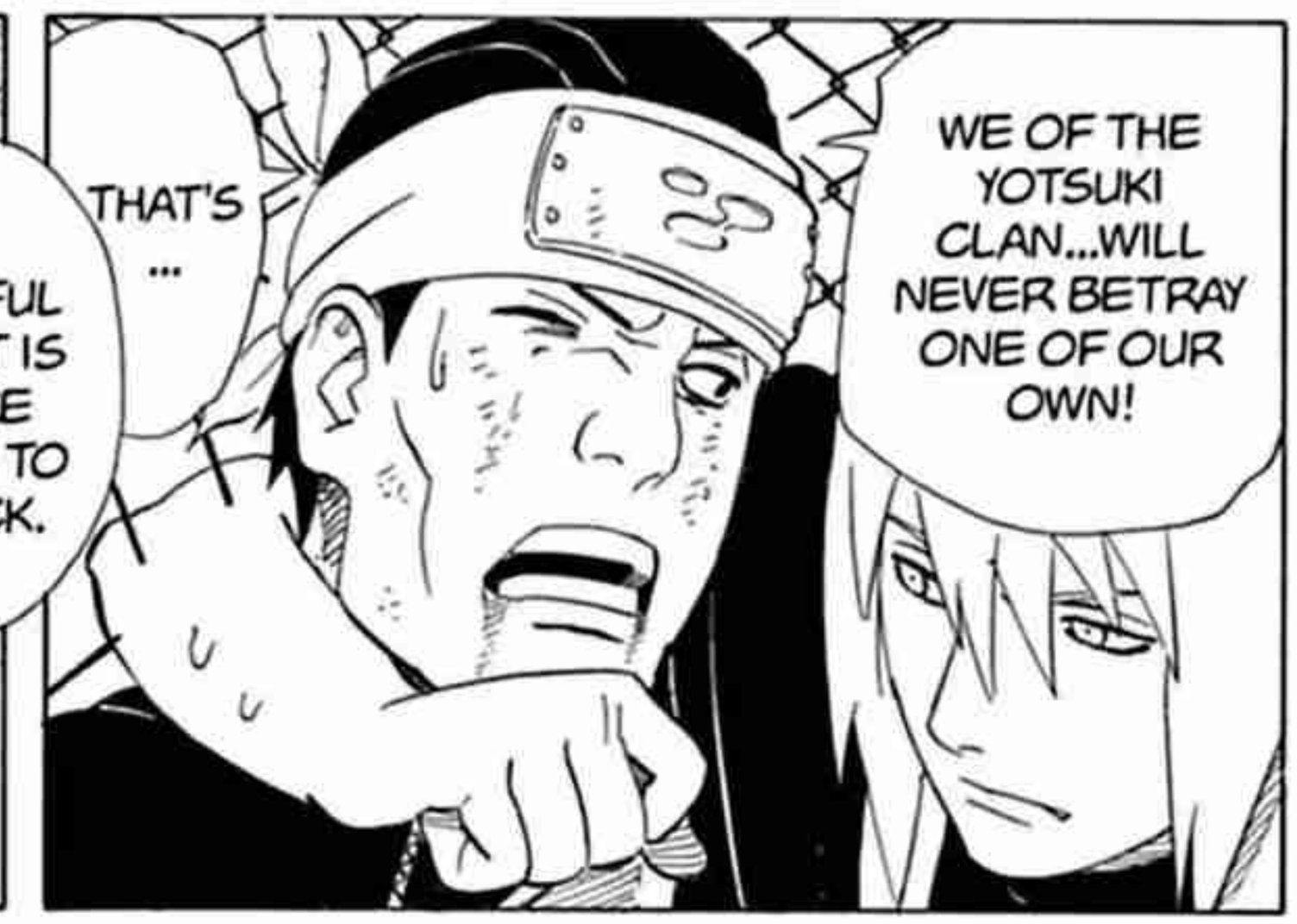

UNH...!
SPL ACH
KRUNCH

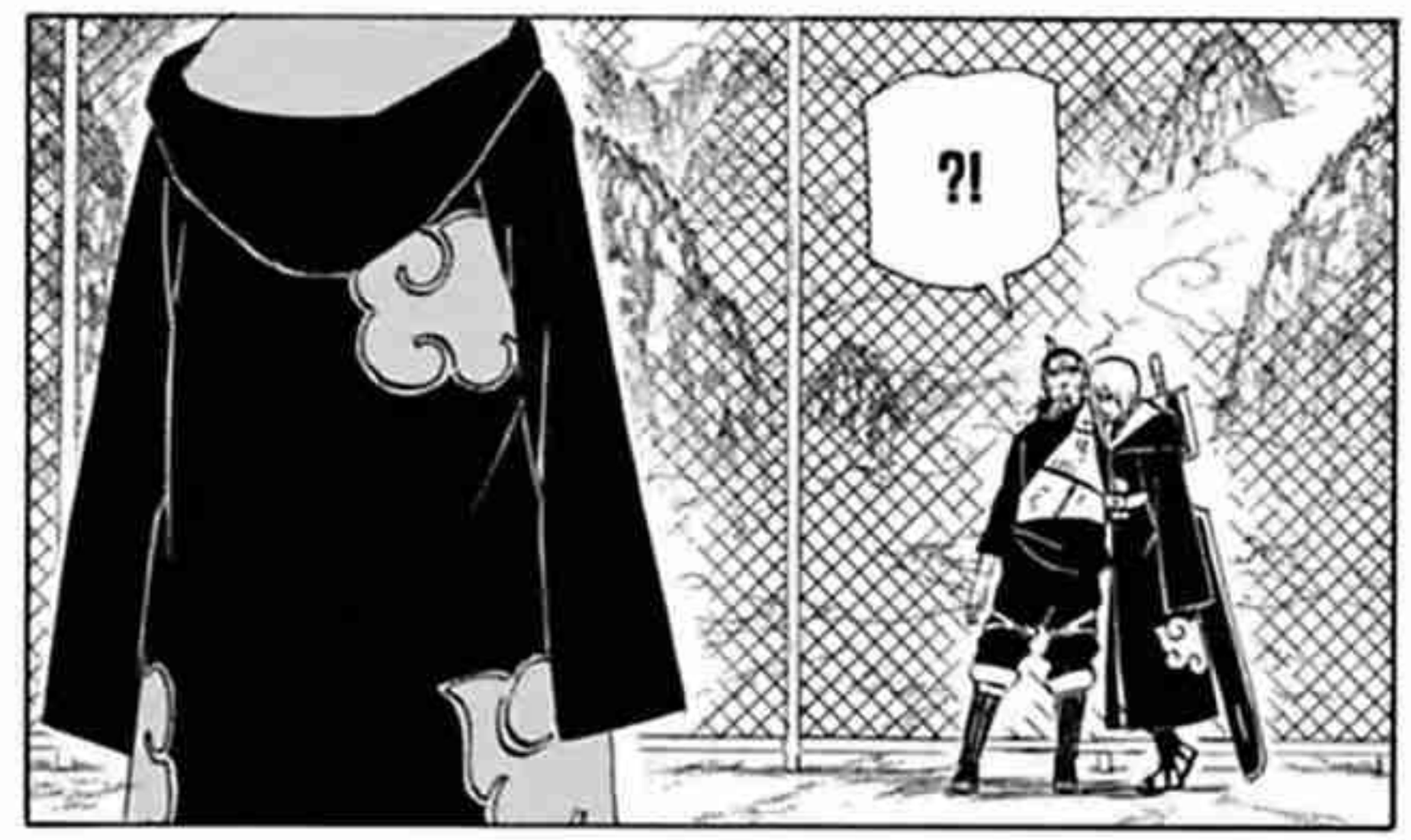
WE'RE NOT GOING TO TELL THE LIKES OF YOU... ANYTHING...!
DON'T YOU UNDER-ESTIMATE OUR CLAN ...


SO WHERE'S THIS EIGHT TAILS, EH?

UGH !!
SHNU UGH

A FEARFUL HEART IS MORE LIKELY TO CRACK.
KRUNCH


THAT'S ...
WE OF THE YOTSUKI CLAN...WILL NEVER BETRAY ONE OF OUR OWN!


?!

SHKEEN

FZ
MP

LET UP, SUIGETSU. HE'S UNDER SASUKE'S GENJUTSU NOW.

GIVE US EIGHT TAILS' LOCATION.

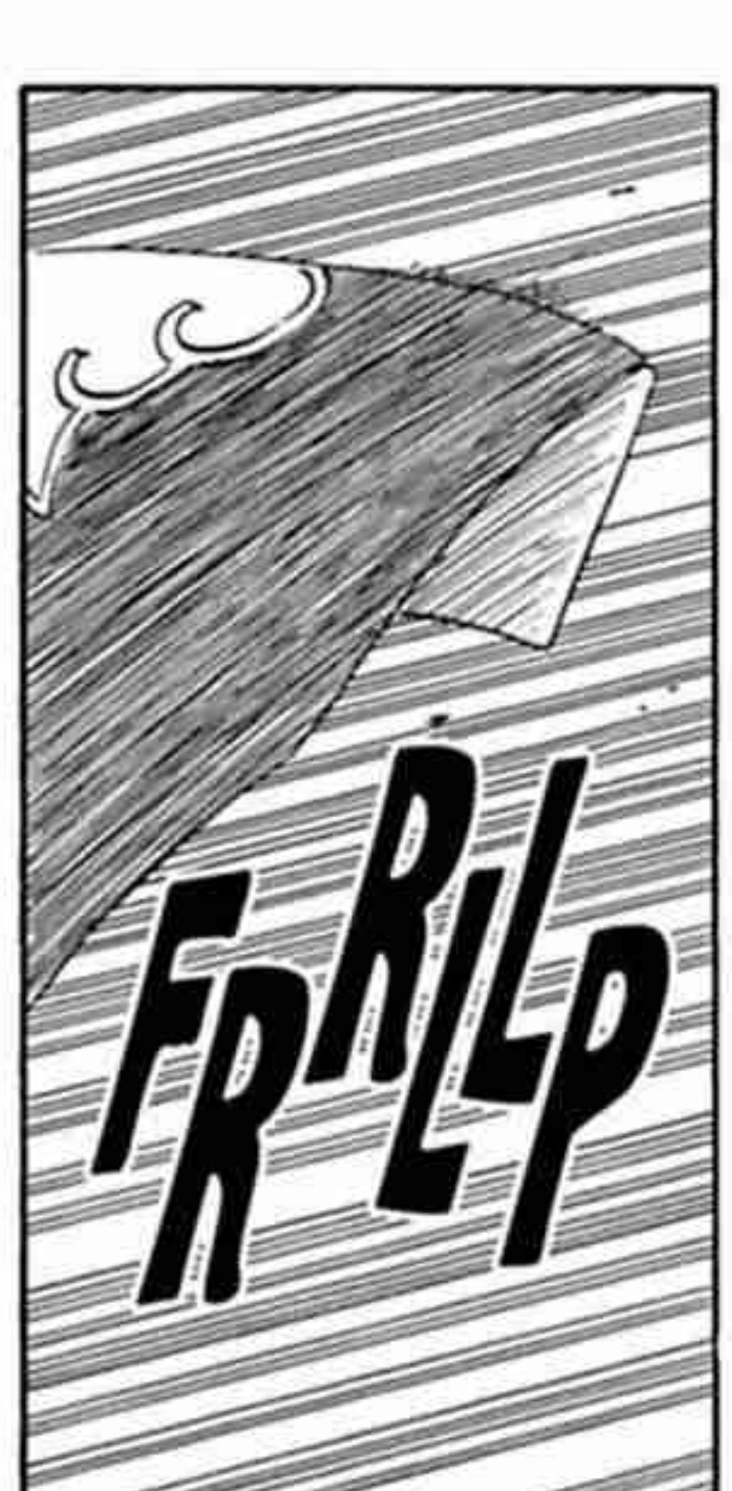
SPLICH
GAH... I WAS JUST GETTING TO THE FUN PART.
FSH

READ
THIS
WAY

ANY DISTIN-GUISHING FEATURES ?

HE'S TRAINING ...
...IN STORM CLOUD... RAVINE.

...HAS THE WORD STEEL (鉄) TATTOOED ON HIS RIGHT SHOULDER... AND BULL HORNS TATTOOED... ON HIS LEFT CHEEK...
...HE WIELDS... EIGHT BLADES...
KLUNK
WRRBLE


FRRILP

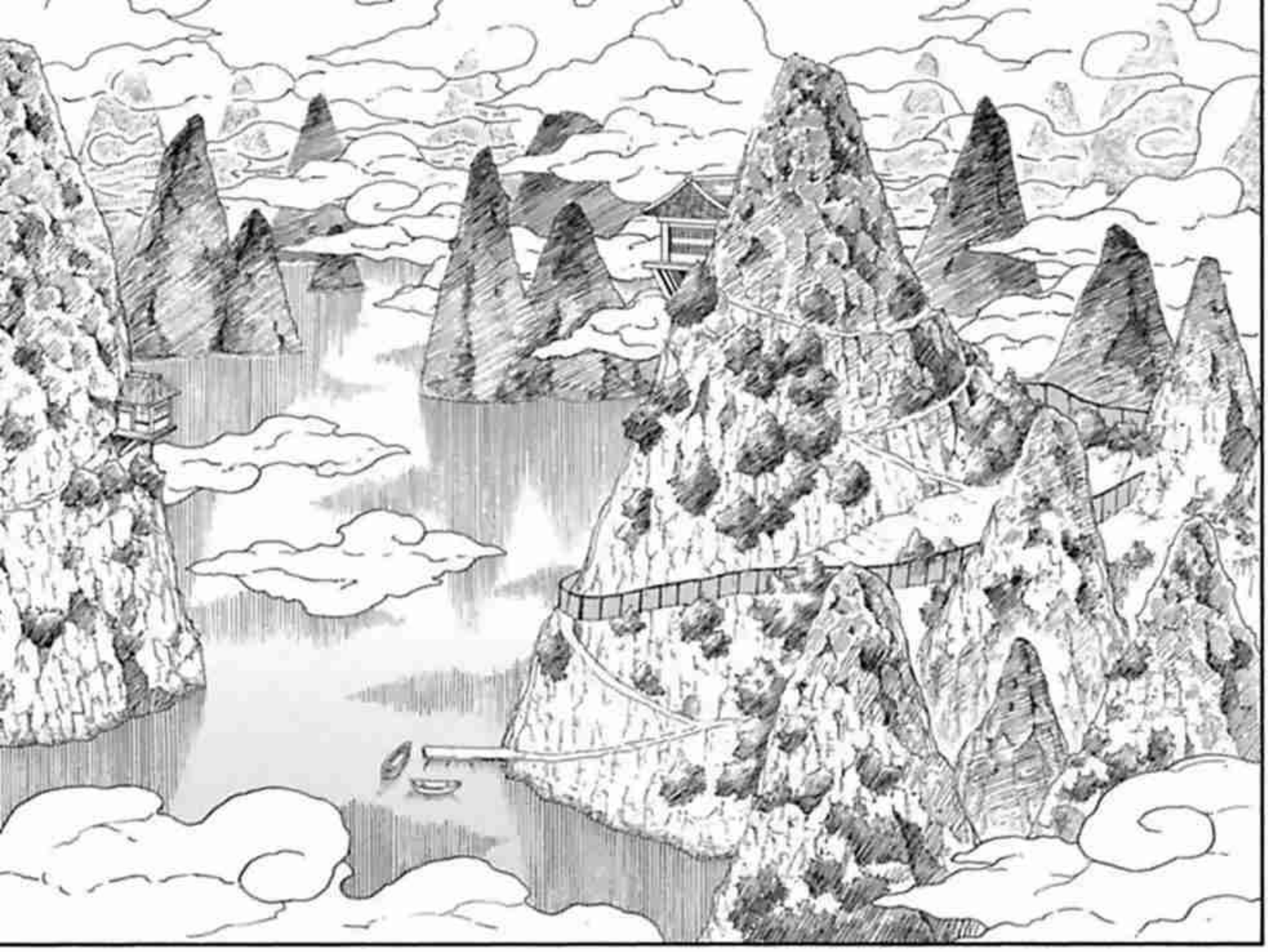
THUD

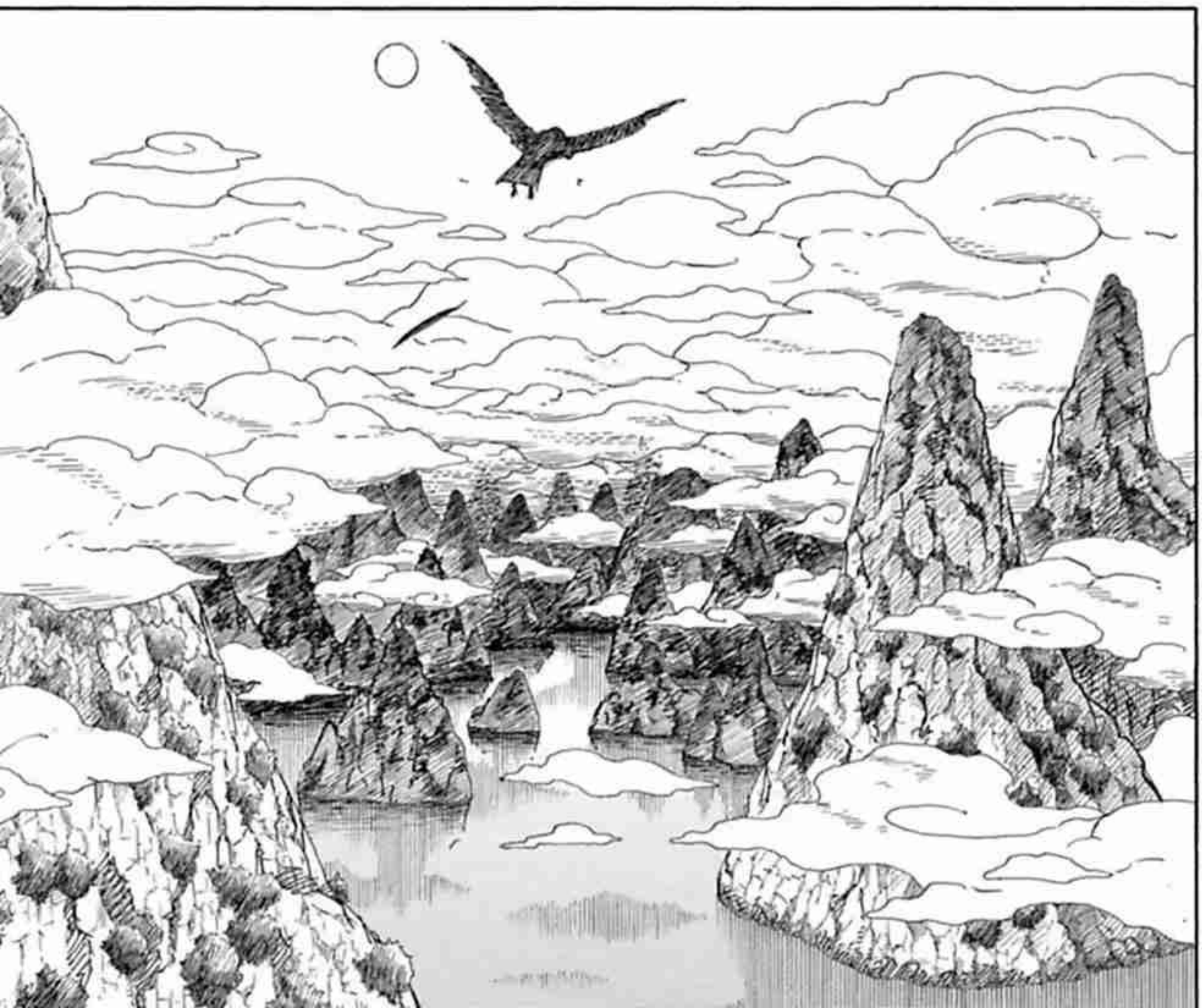
LET'S GO.

I THINK I'LL BE ABLE TO KEEP MYSELF UNDER CONTROL IN THIS PLACE. I FEEL SO CALM HERE.

MY MY... SASUKE'S GOTTEN EVEN COOLER. ♡
TEE HEE ...

THOSE EYES OF HIS HAVE IMPROVED, MAKING HIM EVEN MORE ANNOYING.





THE-REAL-ONE'S-NOT-AMONG-'EM...HUH.
本物葉竟無椅
火
WELL, GEEZER SAGE?!
DOES IT MAKE ANY SENSE?
...

WHOOSH

...

YET A COMPLETELY UNRELATED PAIN KNEW OF A CONVERSATION THAT THE RINNEGAN-BEARING NAGATO AND I SHARED ALONE.

ACTUALLY, NONE OF THOSE SIX REMIND ME OF NAGATO.

THAT MAY, NOT BE HIS FACE, BUT HE STILL FEELS A BIT LIKE NAGATO, FOR SURE.

SO...
...YOU DO HAVE SOME HYPOTHESES, THOUGH?

IT'S STILL TOO UNCLEAR.
I'M NOT SURE...

UNDER THESE CONDITIONS, IT'S STILL MIGHTY DANGEROUS TA TAKE PAIN ON.
WE MUST UNCOVER ALL HIS SECRETS FIRST.
I'VE ALREADY TOLD YA EVERYTHIN' I KNOW ABOUT PAIN...
...HE SEEMS ABLE TO COME BACK FROM THE DEAD...SO I HESITATE TO GIVE YA MERE CONJECTURES.

HOW MUCH LONGER?

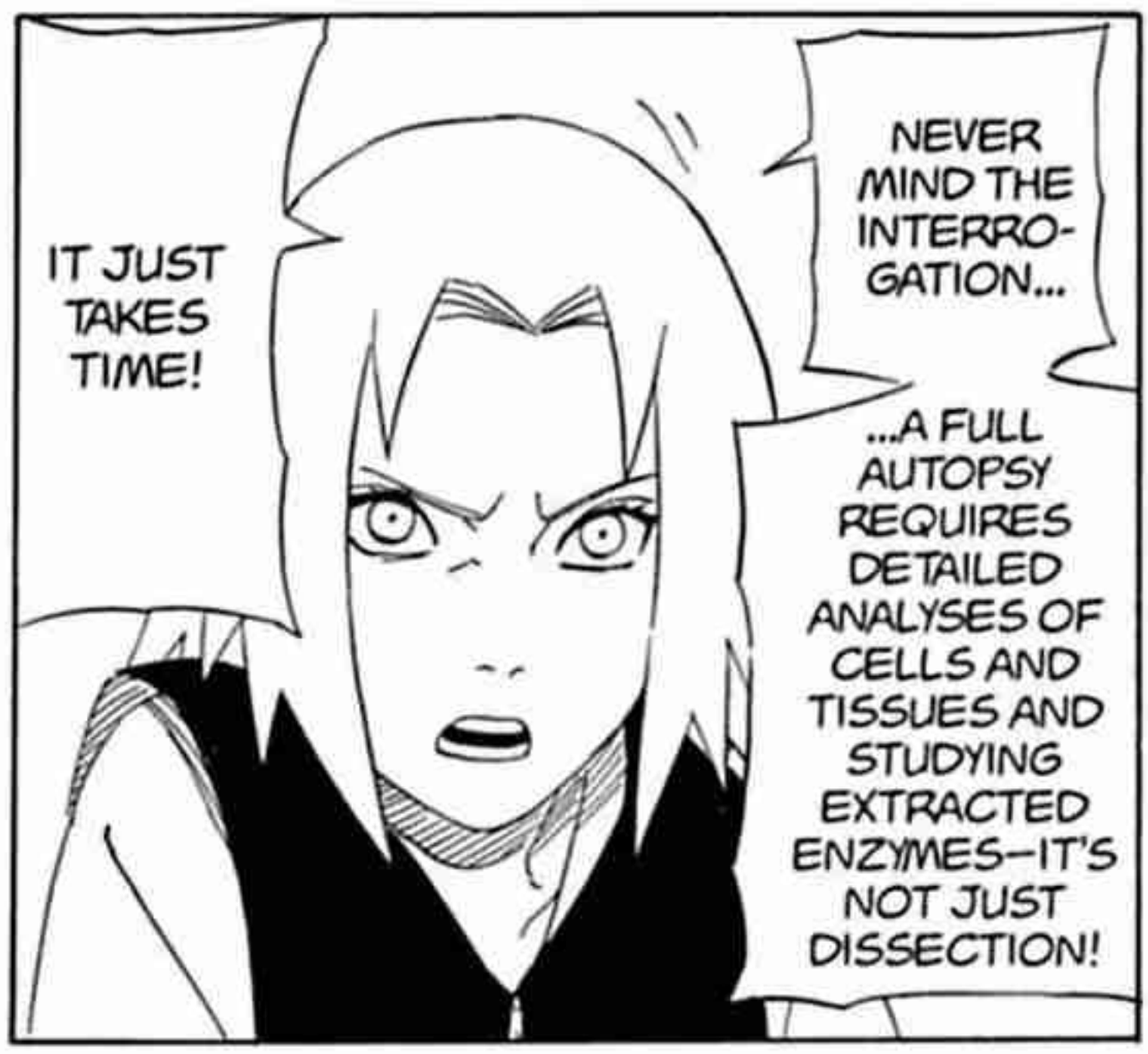
THEY'RE BOTH GOING TO TAKE SOME TIME YET.

HOW ARE THE OTHER INVESTIGA-TIONS GOING?
THE AUTOPSY AND THE INTER-ROGATION ...

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?!
WHAT ARE THEY GOOFIN' AROUND FOR?! WE'RE RUNNING OUT OF TIME.

I DON'T THINK THEY EVEN KNOW.

IT'LL BE A WEEK AT THE SOONEST.


IT JUST TAKES TIME!
NEVER MIND THE INTERRO-GATION...
...A FULL AUTOPSY REQUIRES DETAILED ANALYSES OF CELLS AND TISSUES AND STUDYING EXTRACTED ENZYMES—IT'S NOT JUST DISSECTION!

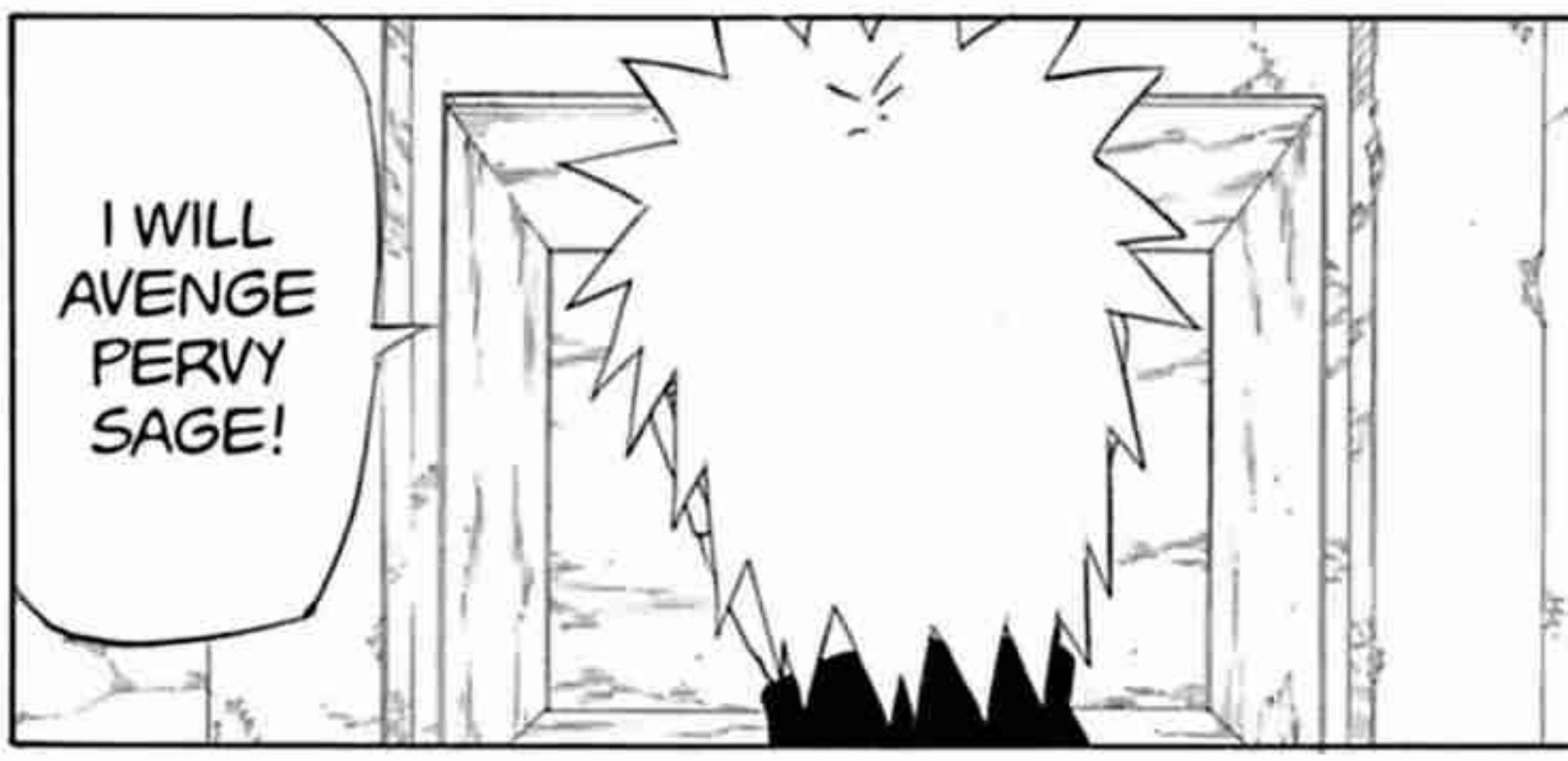
SO WHAT SHOULD WE DO, LADY FIFTH...?

NOW NARUTO, DON'T GET SO GLUM.
SHRUUMP
THAT LONG...?

NARUTO...!
IF YOU BOTHER MASTER SHIZUNE, I WON'T FORGIVE YOU!
I'M GOING TO GO MAKE THEM RUSH!

...SO IT SHOULD BE QUICKER THAN USUAL.
SHIZUNE'S HEADING UP THE AUTOPSY...
WE WILL JUST HAVE TO WAIT.

...!


I WILL AVENGE PERVY SAGE!

...NOW THAT WE'VE DECIPHERED THIS HERE CODE, THERE'S NOTHIN' ELSE GOING ON THAT INVOLVES YOU RIGHT NOW, YA HEAR ME?
NARUTO-BOY...

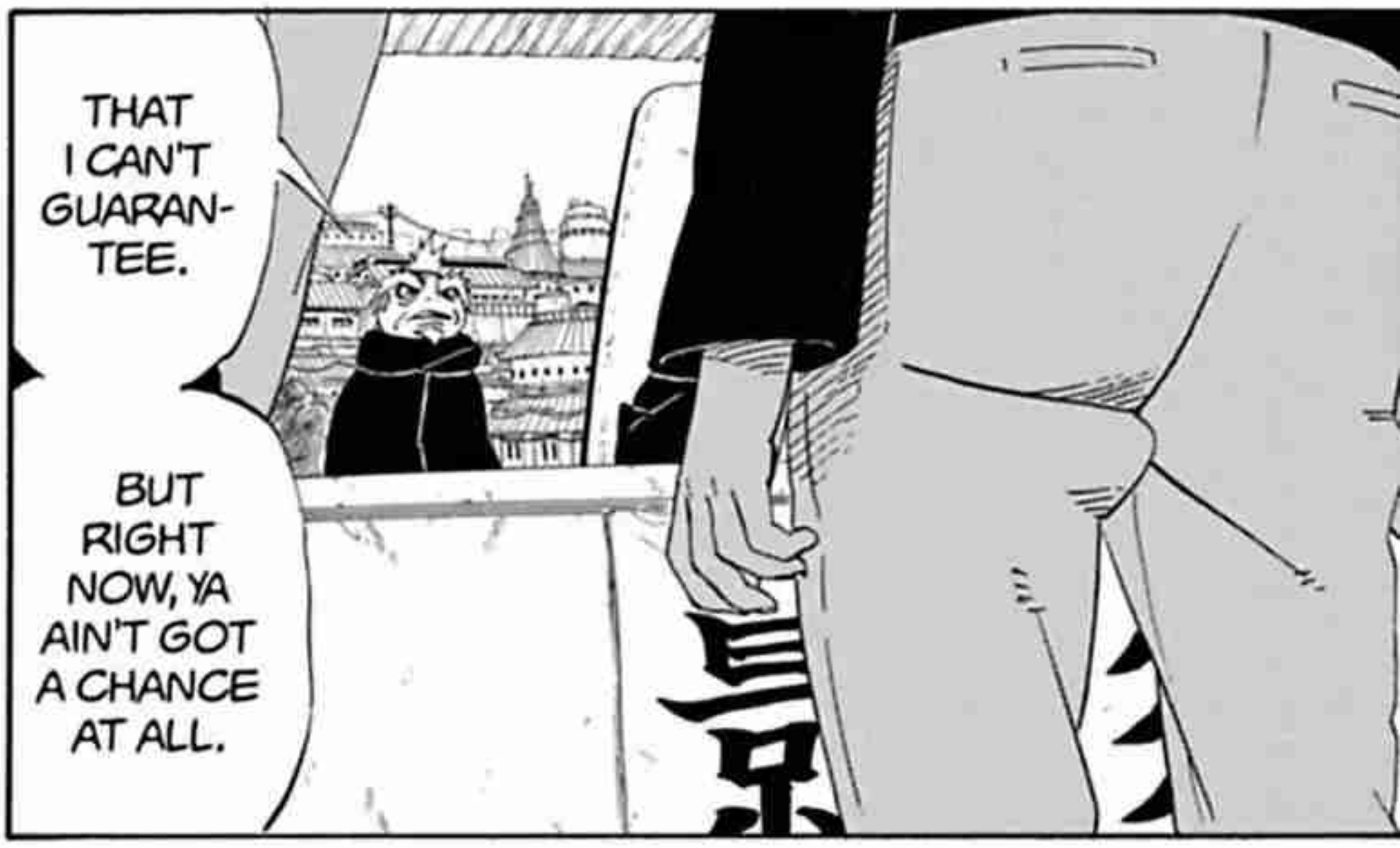
...

I CAN'T JUST SIT AROUND DOING NOTHING!

READ THIS WAY
N' EITHER WAY, YER DEFINITELY NOT STRONG ENOUGH TO DEFEAT PAIN YET.
?!
...SO WHAT ABOUT IT?
?
SO... COME ALONG WITH ME.
THE SAME WAY I HAMMERED IT INTO JIRAIYA-BOY, IF IT'S OKAY WIT' YOU.
I'LL TRAIN YA IN SAGE JUTSU AT MOUNT MYOBOKU.

UNEEN T
WILL IT LET ME WIN AGAINST PAIN?!

...


THAT I CAN'T GUARAN-TEE.
BUT RIGHT NOW, YA AIN'T GOT A CHANCE AT ALL.

YA UP FER IT?
I'M WARNIN' YA RIGHT NOW, SAGE JUTSU TRAININ' IS UN-BELIEVABLY RIGOROUS!

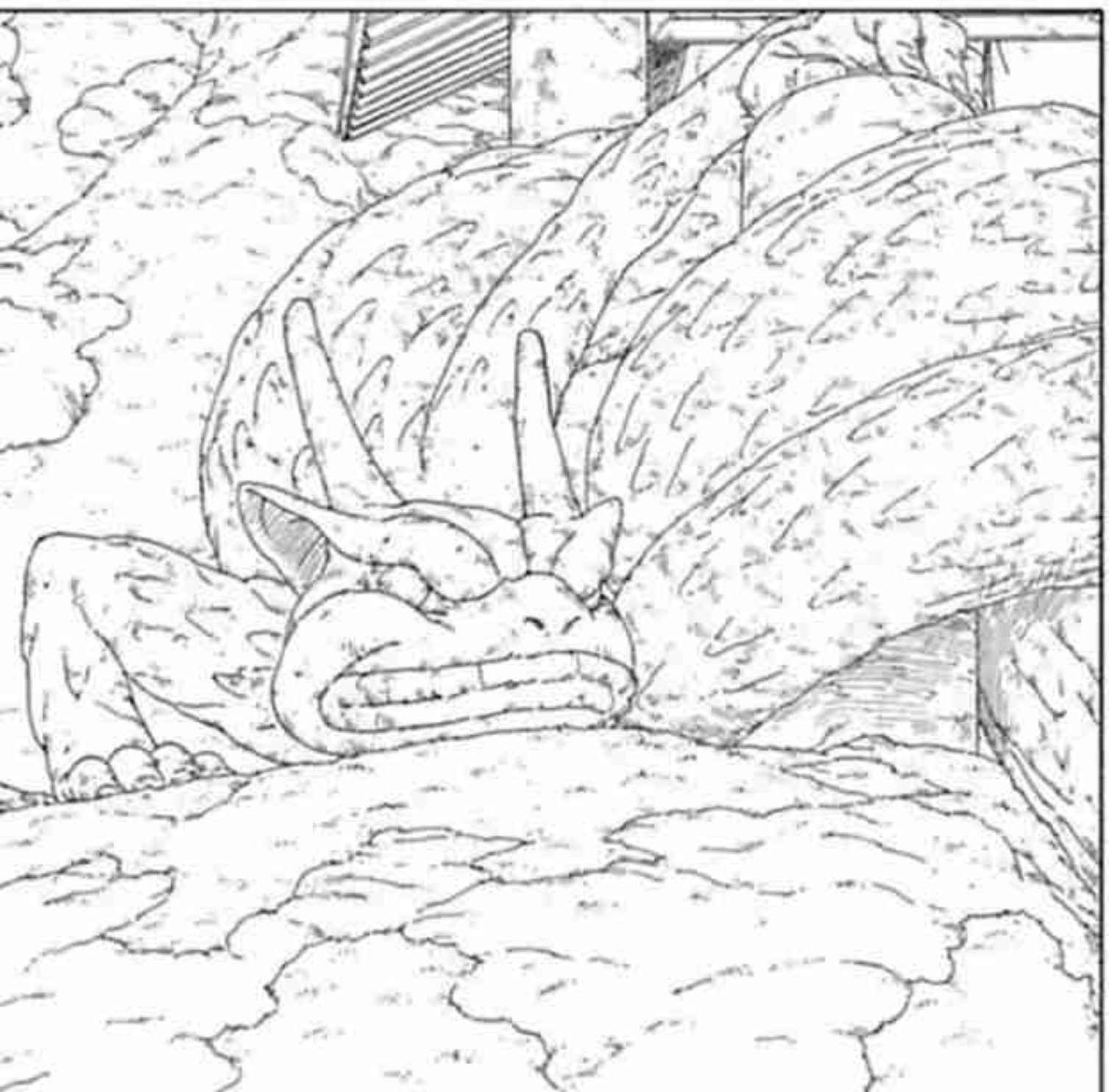
NARUTO, GO GET TRAINED.
OF COURSE ...

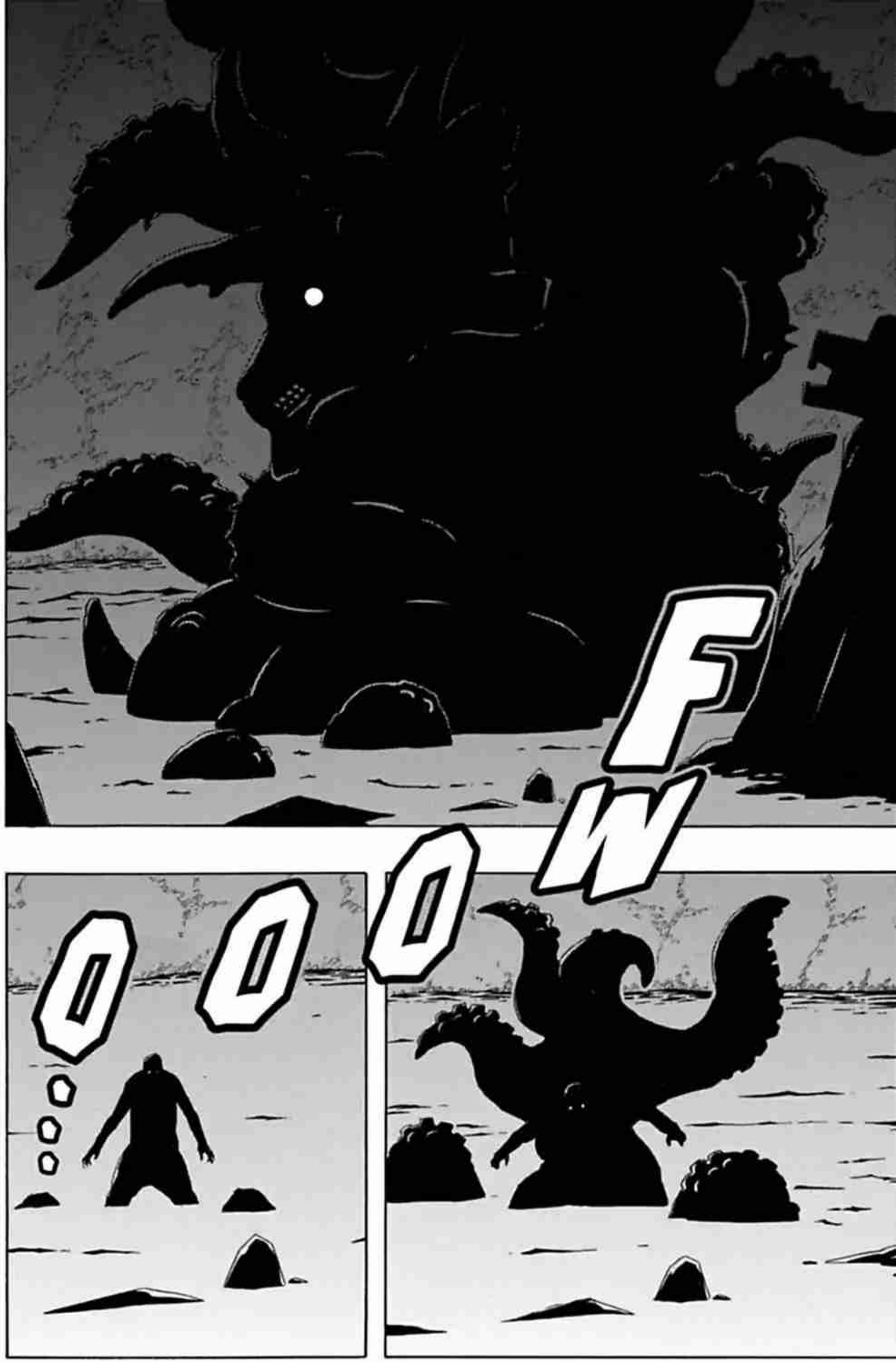
YA ALL RIGHT WITH IT, TSUNADE ?

THEN I'M GOING TO GIVE IT MY BEST SHOT TOO!

I'M IN!!

IF PERVY SAGE WAS ABLE TO MASTER IT...

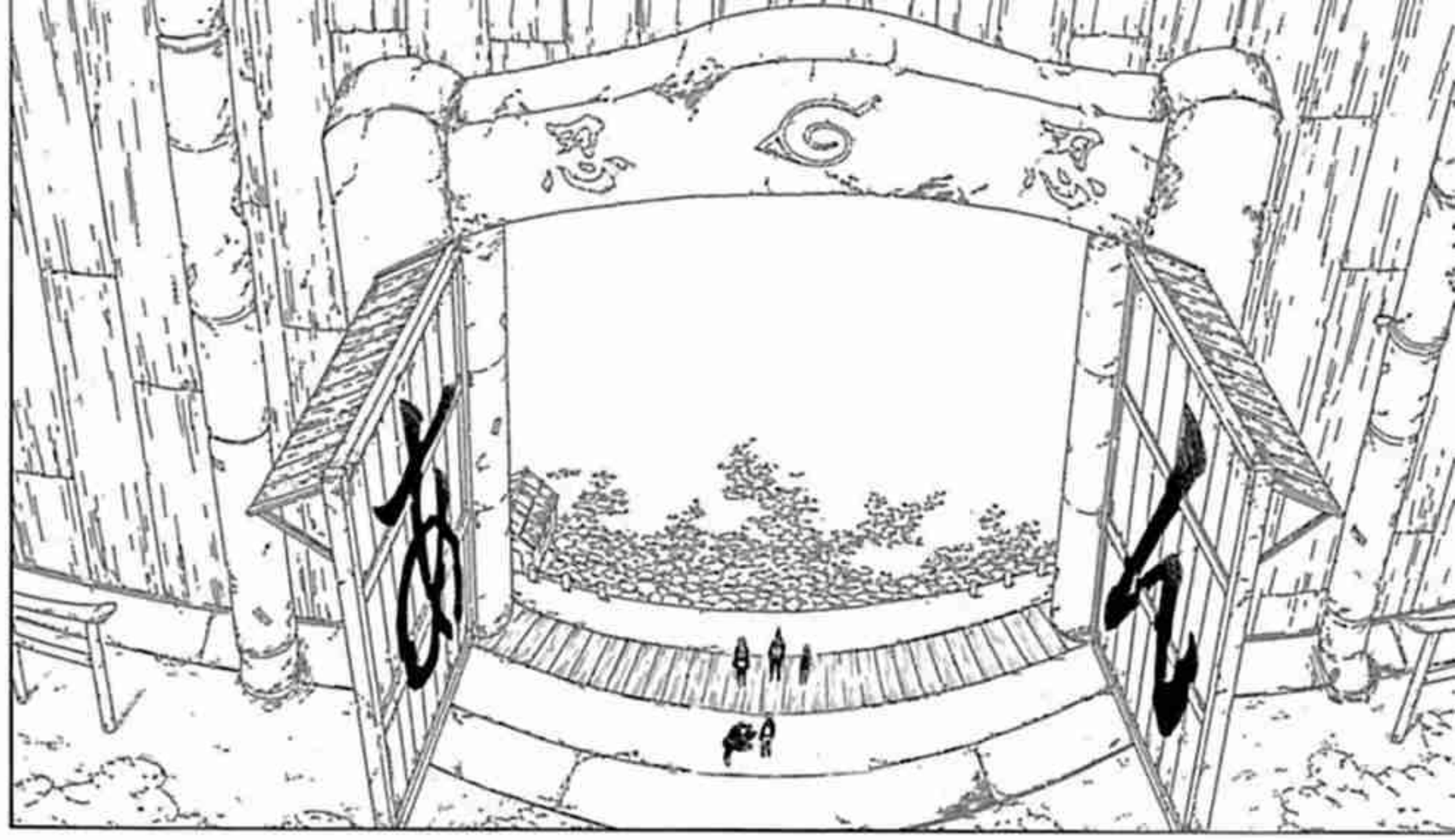



FOW
OOO

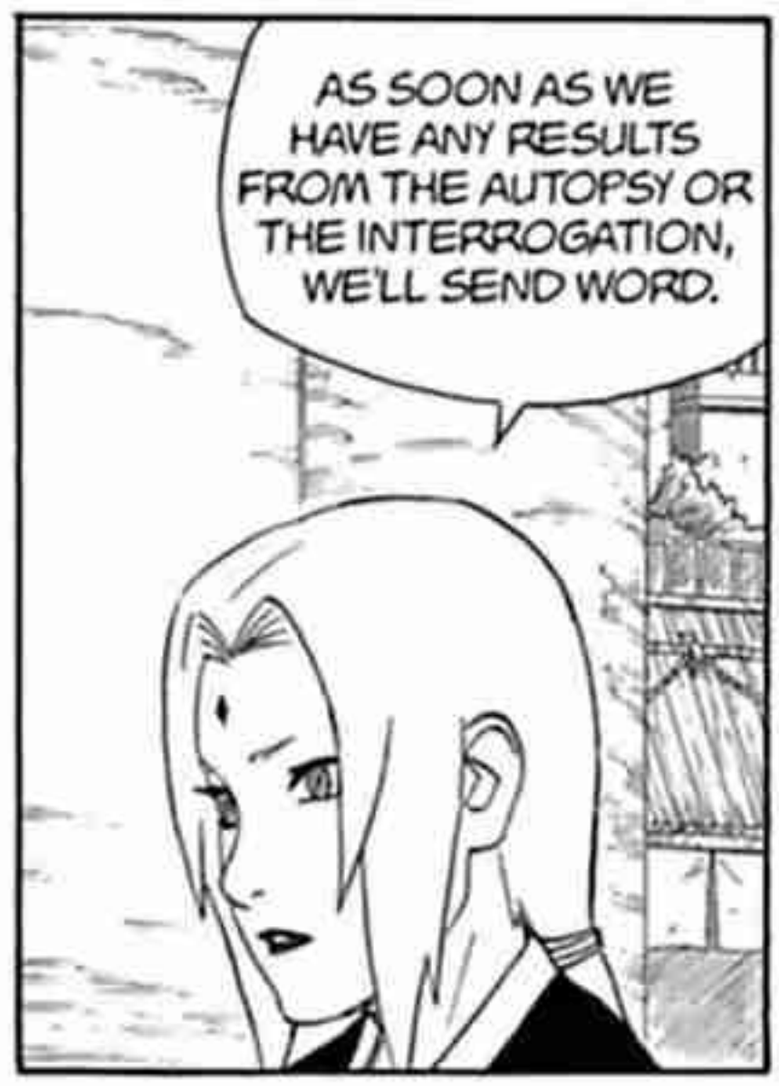
(Storm Cloud Ravine)

NARUTO

Number 409:
Senjutsu the Ninja...!



NARUTO-BOY, SAY YER GOOD-BYES.
WELL, WE SHOULD BE MOSEYING ALONG NOW.


AS SOON AS WE HAVE ANY RESULTS FROM THE AUTOPSY OR THE INTERROGATION, WE'LL SEND WORD.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT US.

SHIKAMARU, I'M HANDING THE CODE OVER TO YOU.
I'M OFF!

YUP!
GOOD LUCK, NARUTO!

IF ANYTHIN' HAPPENS, SEND 'IM BACK.
I'LL LEAVE A MESSENGER FROG WITH YA.

YES SIR.

ALL RIGHT! LET'S GO!
FFT

ER... WHICH WAY'S MOUNT MYOBOKU, AGAIN?
SHARK

TIKRRAK
...


...
SHUP
SHUP

SHRUUMP
IT'S REALLY THAT HARD TO GET THERE?

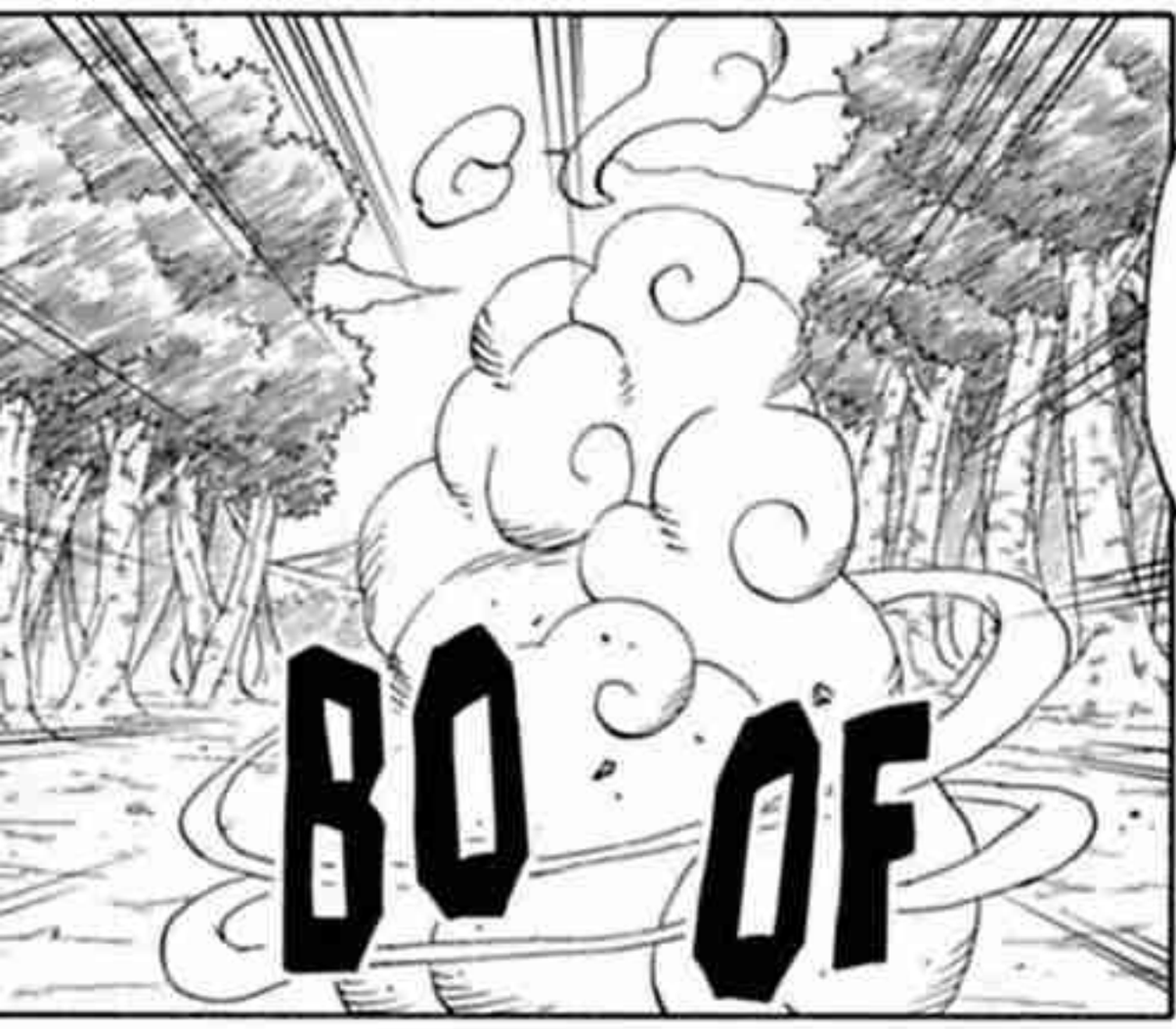
N' AS IT'S ALSO KNOWN AS MAZE MOUNTAIN...
...IF YA DON'T KNOW THE SECRET ROUTE, YA WON'T BE ABLE TA GIT THERE.
IT TAKES A MONTH TO GET THERE ON FOOT.

NARUTO-BOY... YA'VE ALREADY SIGNED A BINDING CONTRACT WITH US TOADS.
THERE'S NO NEED TO WORRY.
BO

WE ARE IN YOUR DEBT.

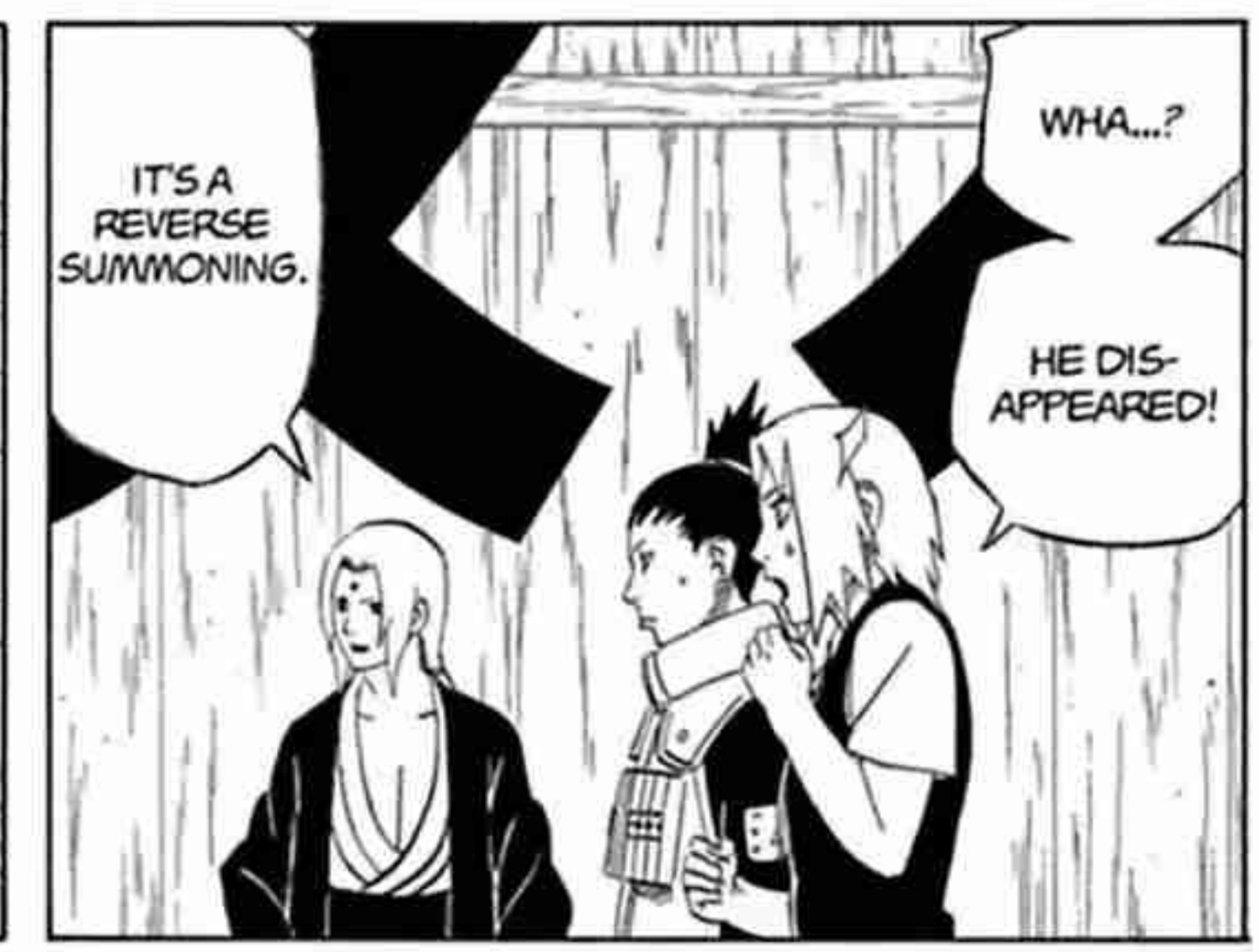
BO-OF
WELL THEN, I'LL BE BORROWIN' THAT BOY.

THAT'S ...!
OH!


BOOF

BUT WHAT DO YOU MEAN, THERE'S NO NEE...

WOW ...


IT'S A REVERSE SUMMONING.
WHA...?
HE DIS-APPEARED!

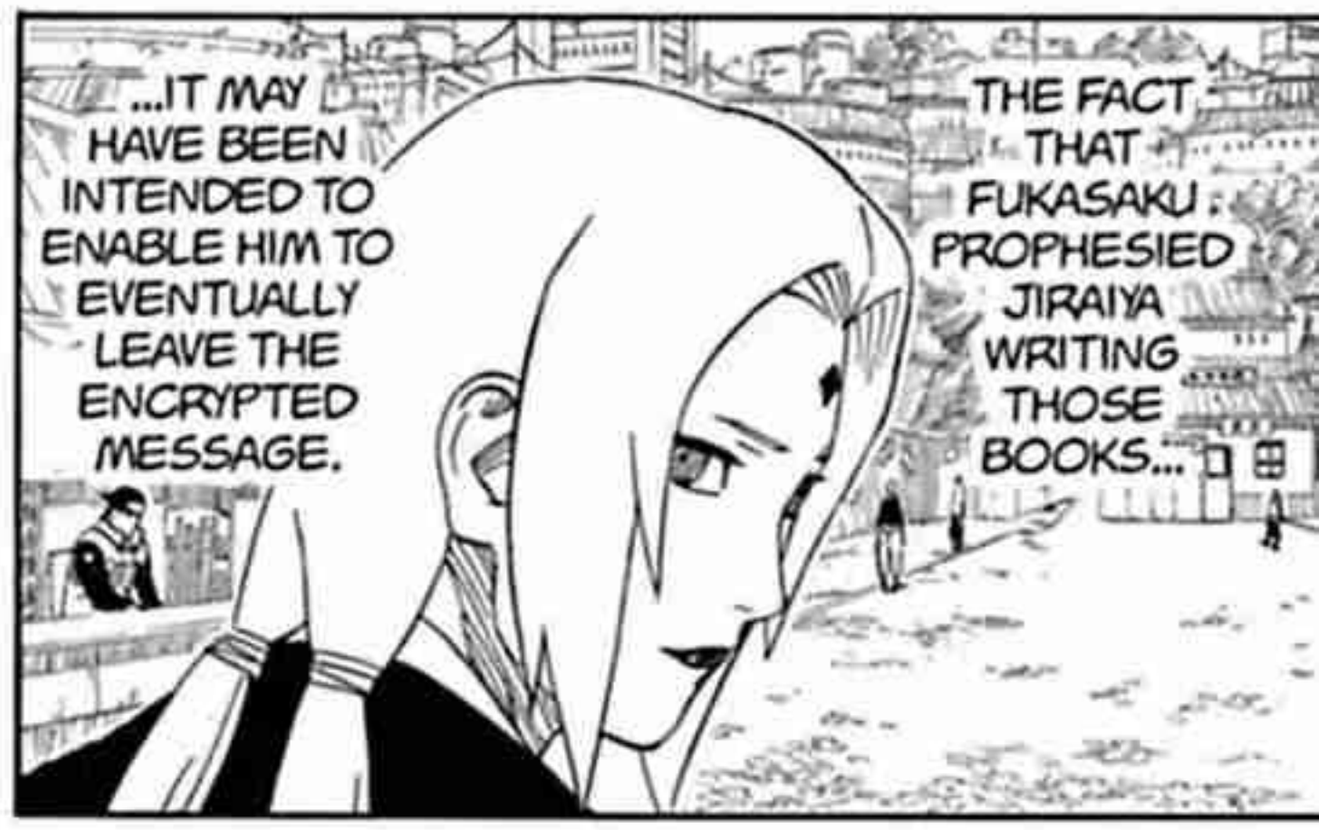
BOOF

GOOD LUCK ON YOUR END TOO.

YES MA'AM.

ROGER.

OKAY, LET'S GO DEVOTE OURSELVES TO DECIPHERING JIRAIYA'S OTHER BEQUESTS.



DESTROY ALL SHINOBI WHO INTERFERE.
OUR GOAL IS NINE TAILS.
ALL IS READY.
?!
VO
OSH

!!

NARUTO.
GAMA-KICHI!

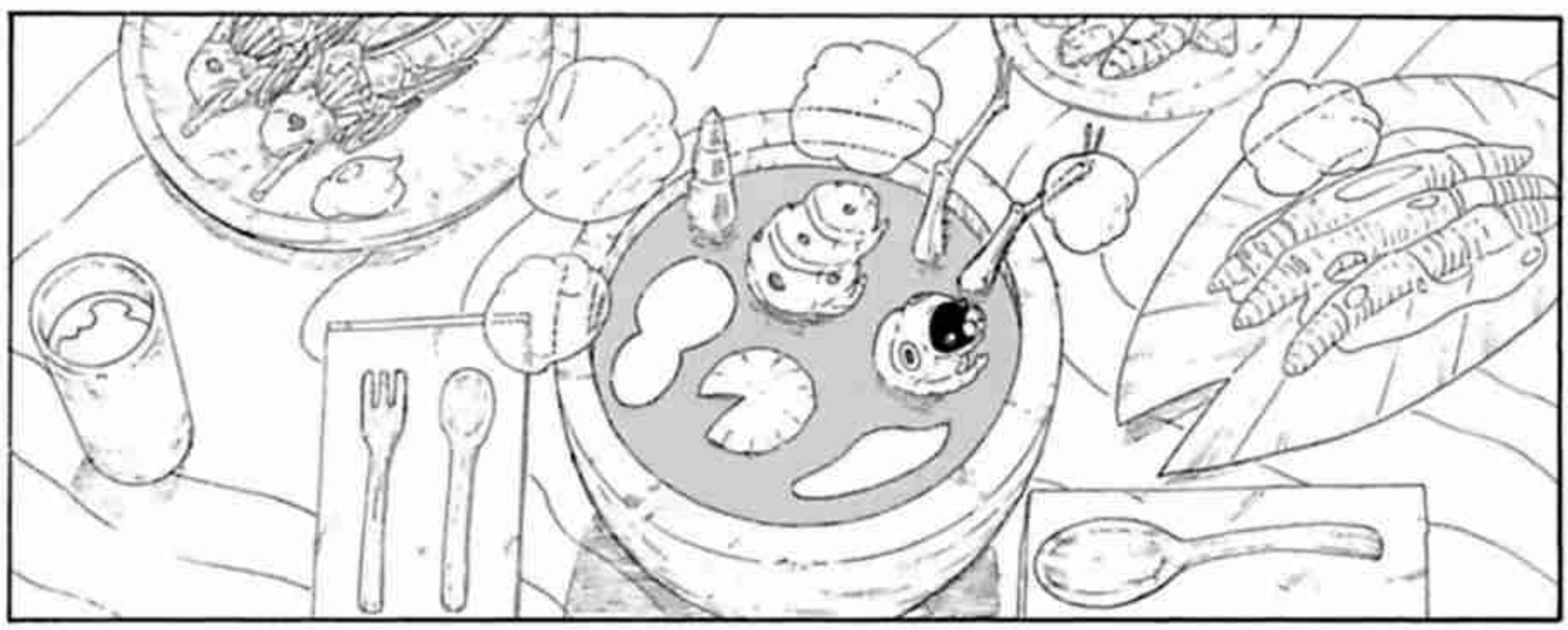
WHAT THE?

BOOF

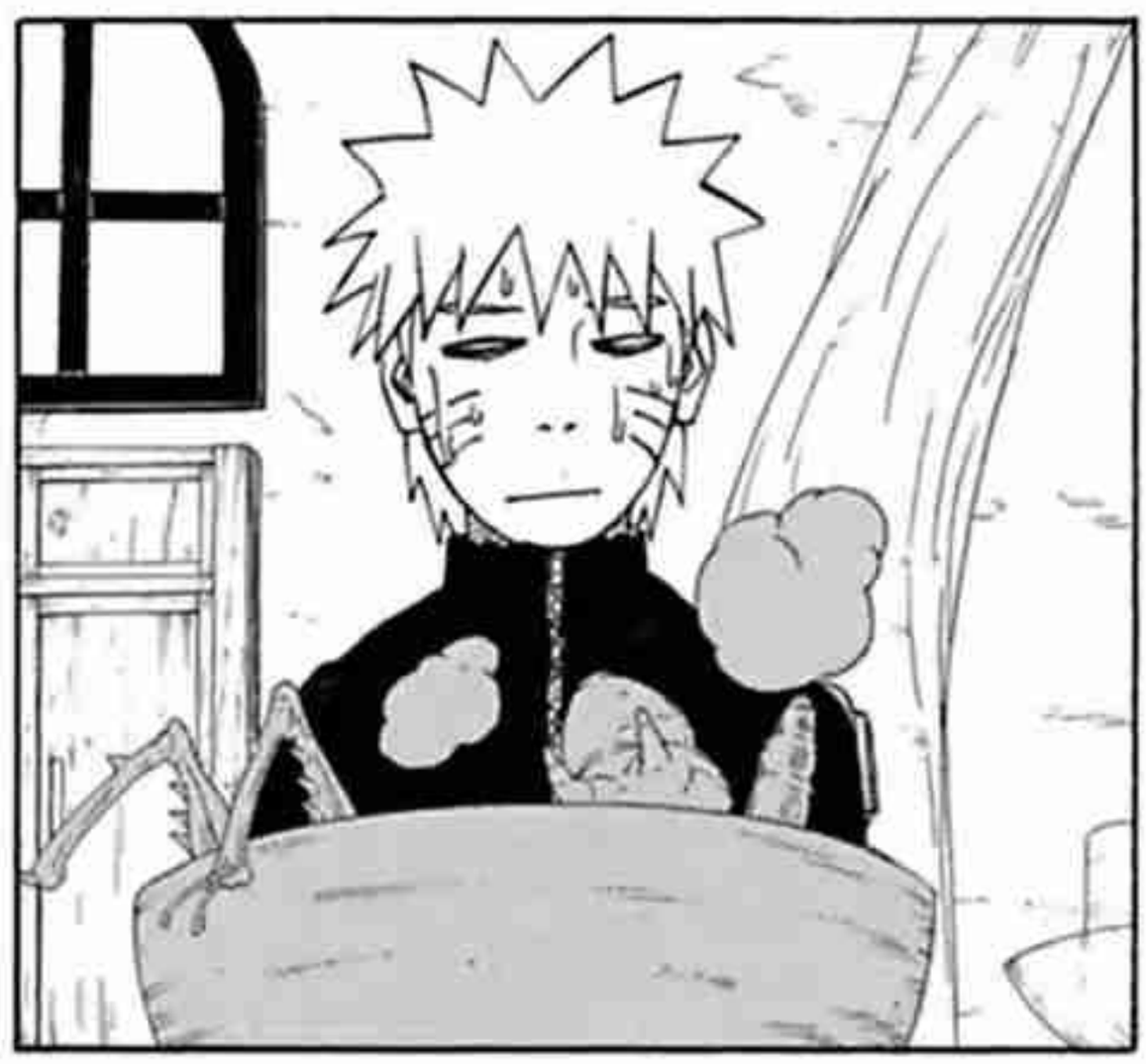
?
FIRST, LET'S A FILL OUR STOMACHS BEFORE WE START TRAININ'. COME ALONG.

HUH, NEAT.
...I SEE.

YOU'RE HERE BECAUSE I SUMMONED YOU.

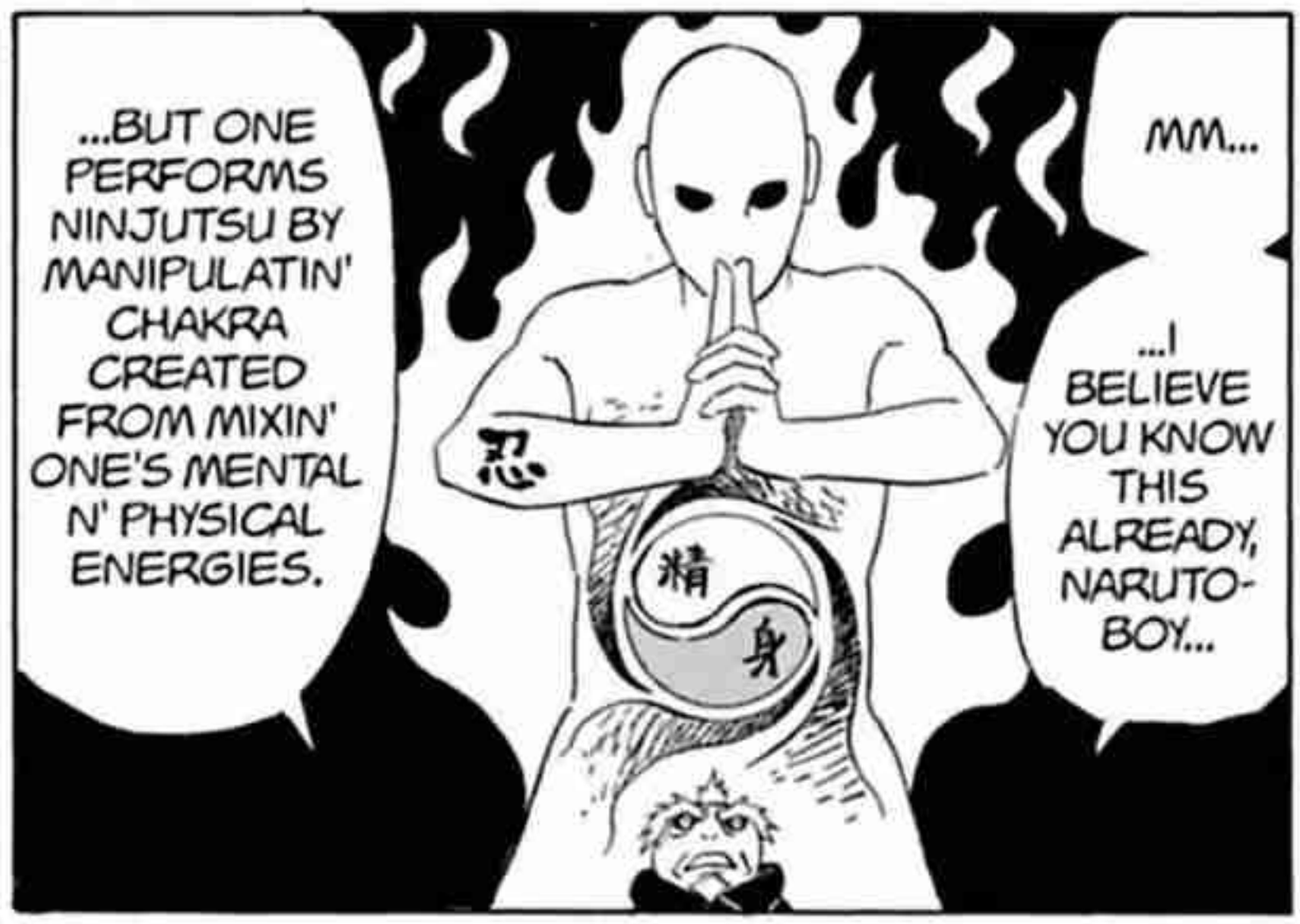


I PUT EXTRA EFFORT INTO MAKIN' THIS MEAL!
NOW, EAT YER FILL!

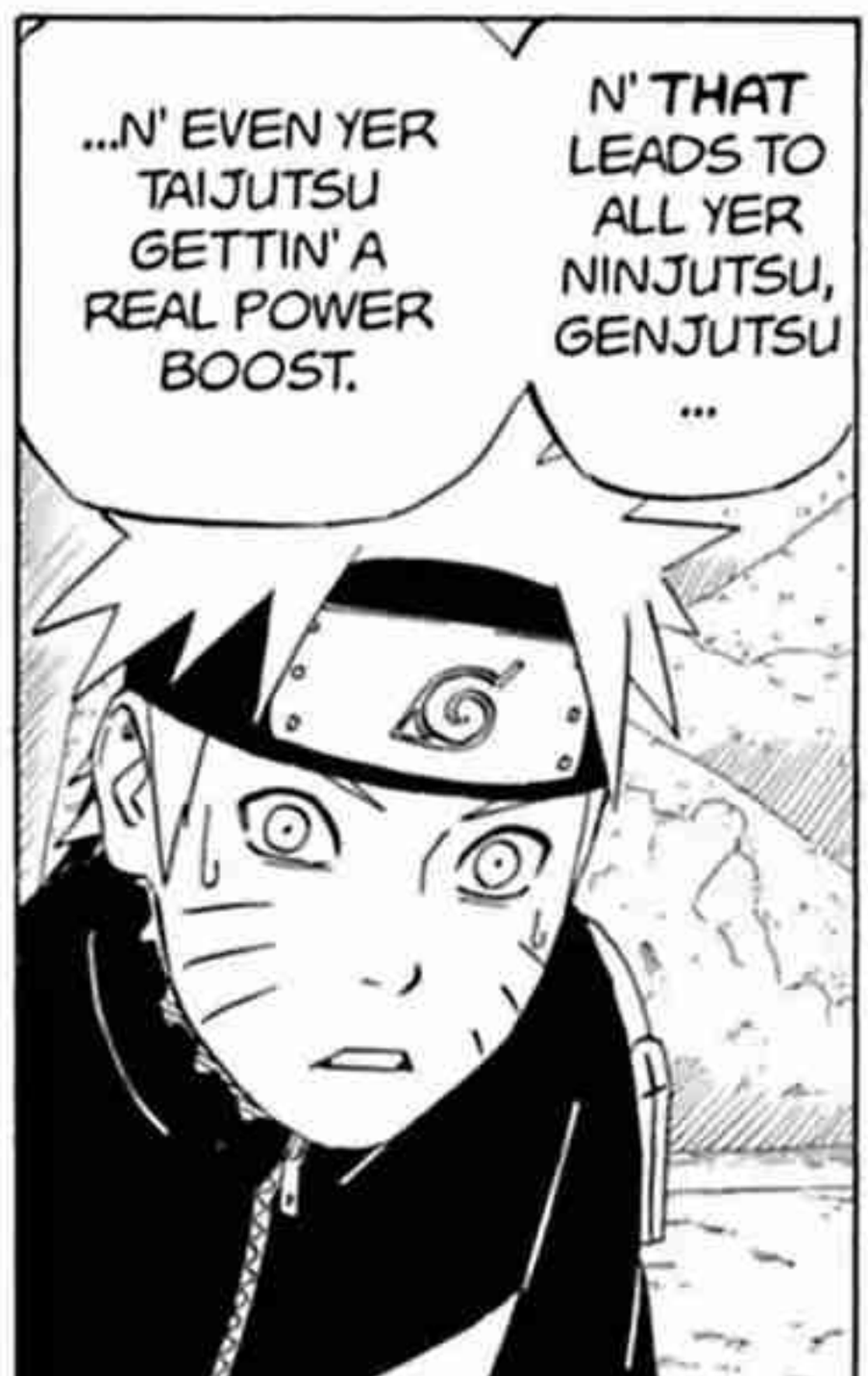


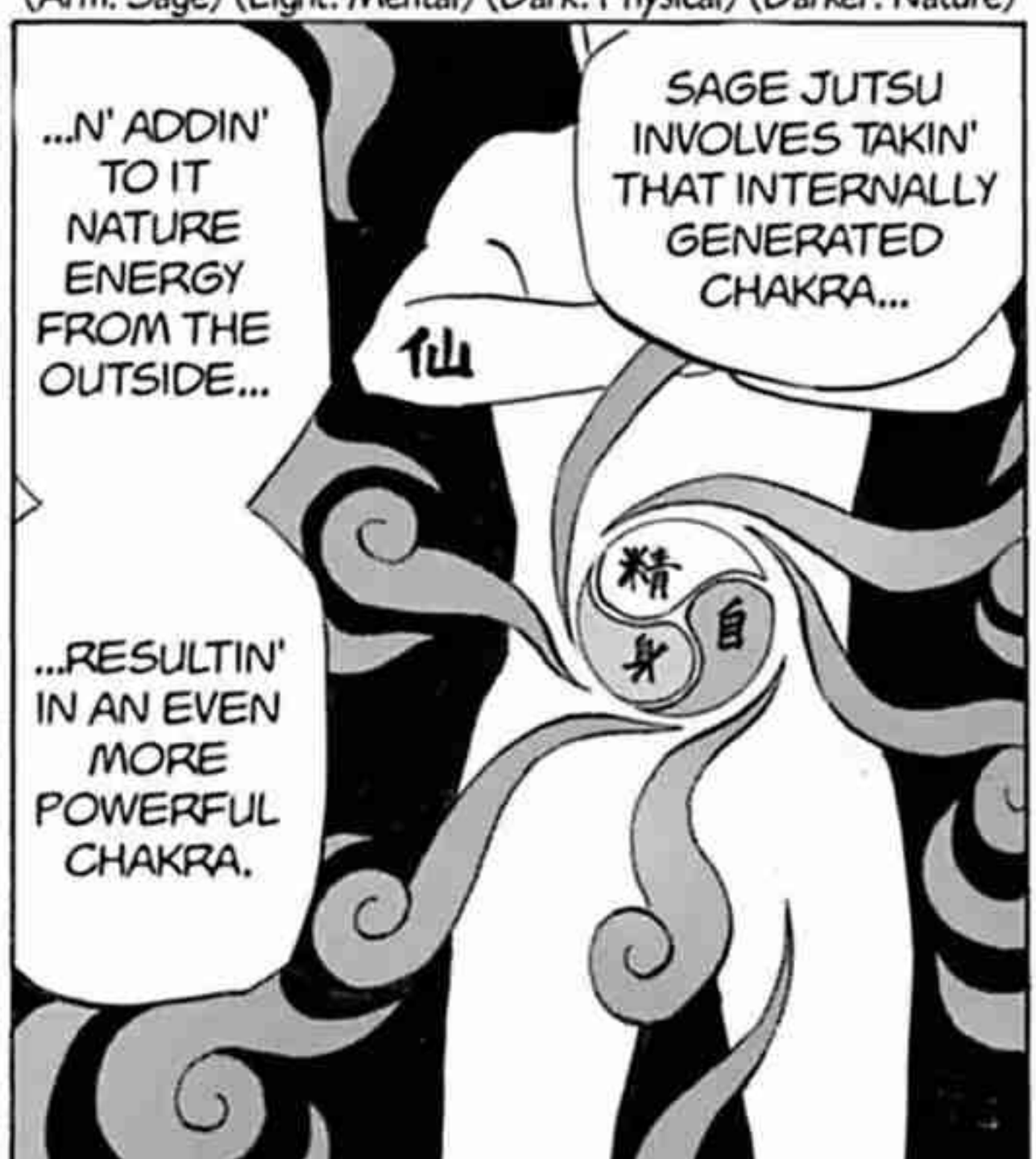
TOK TOK TOK...

UGH...



(Arm: Sage) (Light: Mental) (Dark: Physical) (Darker: Nature)



JUTSU BORN FROM THE CHAKRA CREATED BY THESE THREE ENERGIES MIXED...

...IS WHAT'S KNOWN AS SAGE JUTSU.

DUNF

MENTAL ENERGY N' PHYSICAL ENERGY FROM INSIDE YOU...

...N' NATURE ENERGY FROM THE OUTSIDE.

QUIT CONFUSIN' HIM MORE, GAMAKICHI!

IN OTHER WORDS, IT'S LIKE HOW ADDIN' MINT FLAVOR TO A SWIRLED CHOCOLATE N' VANILLA SOFT SERVE MAKES IT EVEN **MORE** DELICIOUS.

HUH...

SO WHAT'S THIS NATURE ENERGY THING?

IT TOOK THAT TO MAKE YA UNDER-STAND, EH...

HEH HEH... THAT'S THE KINDA FELLA NARUTO IS...

OH! I GET IT NOW!

OH... RIGHT.
GAH... ENOUGH TALK. LET ME JUST SHOW YA.
SHUP SHUP SHUP
AS IN THE AIR N' THE EARTH.

ATMOS-PHERE AND TERRAIN ...
HUH...
ENERGY THAT IS EXTERNAL TO YA...THE ENERGY THAT EXISTS IN THE ATMOSPHERE N' THE TERRAIN.

YOU'RE GATHERIN' NATURE ENERGY SO EASILY!!
WOW!! YOU REALLY ARE AMAZIN', LORD FUKASAKU!

HUH? WHERE?
?!

KLOMP

WH-WHOA...

THIS SHOULD BE GOOD ENOUGH.
FWP
SPRONG
SPRONG

WOOWA

THIS...IS THE POWER OF NATURE ENERGY-ENHANCED SAGE JUTSU.

W-WELL...?

H-HE'S LIFTING THAT?!!

RWISSH

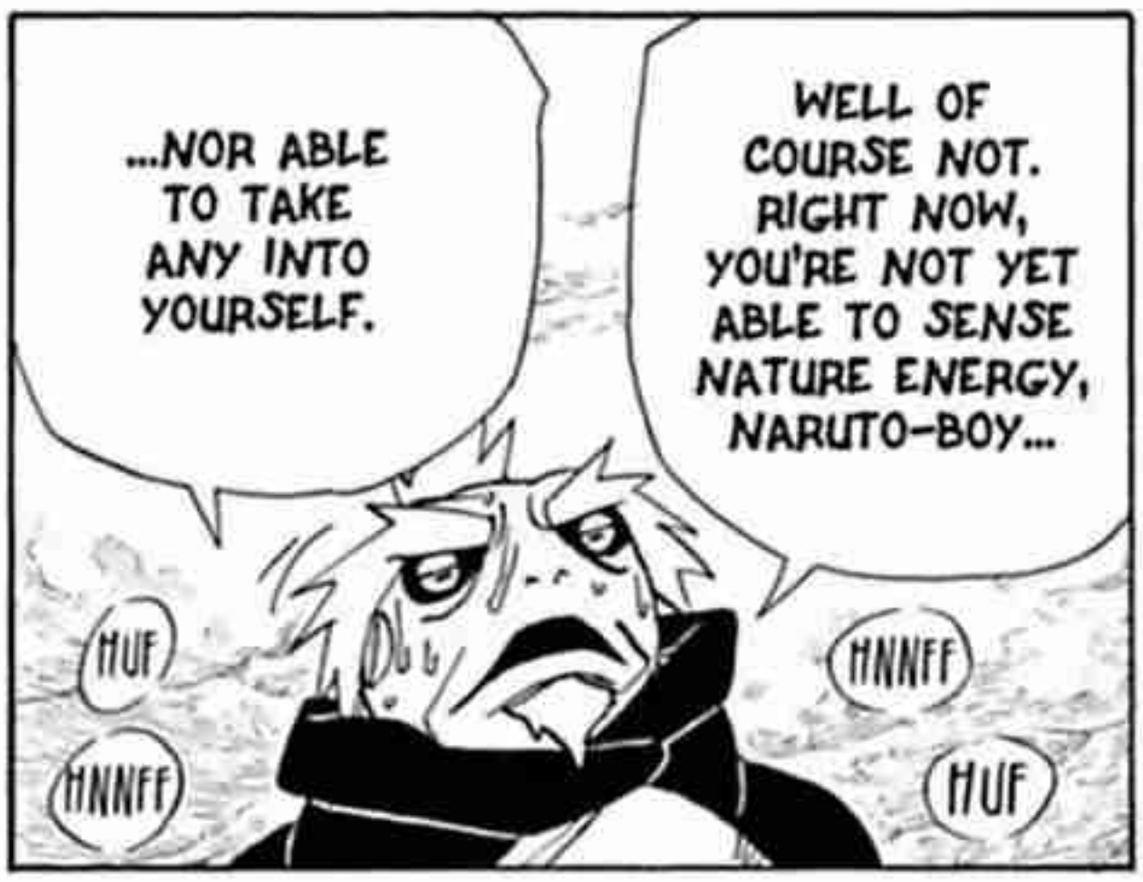
RWISSH

PHO

WHOA!

FBRRRFBRRR BRRR BRRR

UM...

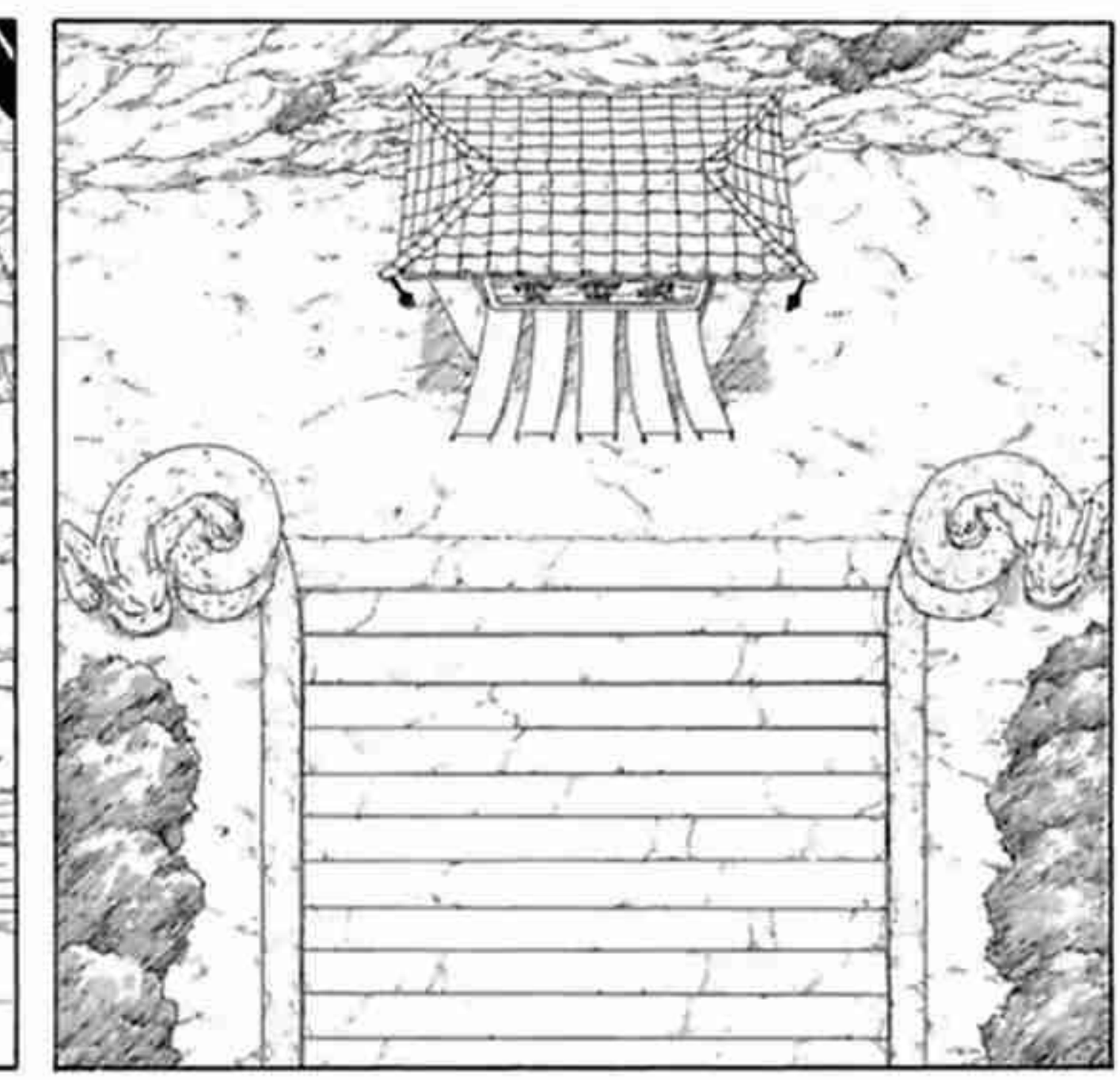


AS IN DIE.

URR... BECOME ONE...?
...

EH?

SHUP



OR, ARE YOU LORD JINCHÛRIKI, SIR? EH...
HEY, THAT'S ARE YOU LORD EIGHT TAILS, SIR? TO YOU.

ARE YOU EIGHT TAILS' JINCHÛRIKI?

I'M HERE TO CAPTURE YOU.

NARUTO

KARIN, YOU GET MY BACK.

JUGO, THE LEFT.

SUIGE-TSU, COVER THE RIGHT.

I'LL TAKE HIM DOWN.

HMM... LET'S SEE...

FWOOO
Number 410:
The Battle at Storm Cloud Ravine!!

# Number 410: The Battle at Storm Cloud Ravine!!

NARUTO
-ナルト-

I'M IN DA MIDST O'MY RHYMEZ, Y'ALL IZ BUSTIN' IN ON MY TIME, ...AN' NOW I GOTTA SPIT MY LINE, FOOLS, YA FOOLS!

BOOM

SCRIITCH

DON'T WORRY.
I STILL FEEL HIS CHAKRA LOUD AND CLEAR.

...THE JINCHÛRIKI, REMEMBER, SUIGETSU?
THE AKATSUKI TOLD US NOT TO COMPLETELY WIPE OUT...

READ THIS WAY
SHEESH, WHAT A FLASHY DIVERSION.
DA ONLY ONE WHO GETS TO DIG ME IS ME, YO. ♪
SO STAND BACK AN' STAY BACK, OR YOU'LL GET WHACK, YA FOOL. ♪
STEP BACK, SUIGETSU ...
SHUP
WHORL
UGH!
FWAP

HOW DOES DYING MEAN BECOMING ONE WITH NATURE?

...DIE?!

RELAX. YOU'RE NOT ACTUALLY GONNA DIE, NARUTO-BOY.

BUT...
GAMAKICHI, WHAT'S WITH THE DYIN'? THAT'S TOO MUCH!
DON'T MAKE SUCH WEIRD ANALOGIES!

...

I'LL EXPLAIN IT STEPWISE.
JUST LISTEN 'TIL THE END.

...IS TO BECOME ABLE TO SENSE IT, ATTRACT IT N' ABSORB IT THROUGH YER SKIN.

SPRONG

TO TAKE NATURE ENERGY INTO ONESELF...

...

IN ADDITION, BY BECOMIN' ONE WITH NATURE...

...YA ALSO GAIN FULL CONTROL OVER NATURE ENERGY ENTERIN' N' LEAVIN' YER BODY.

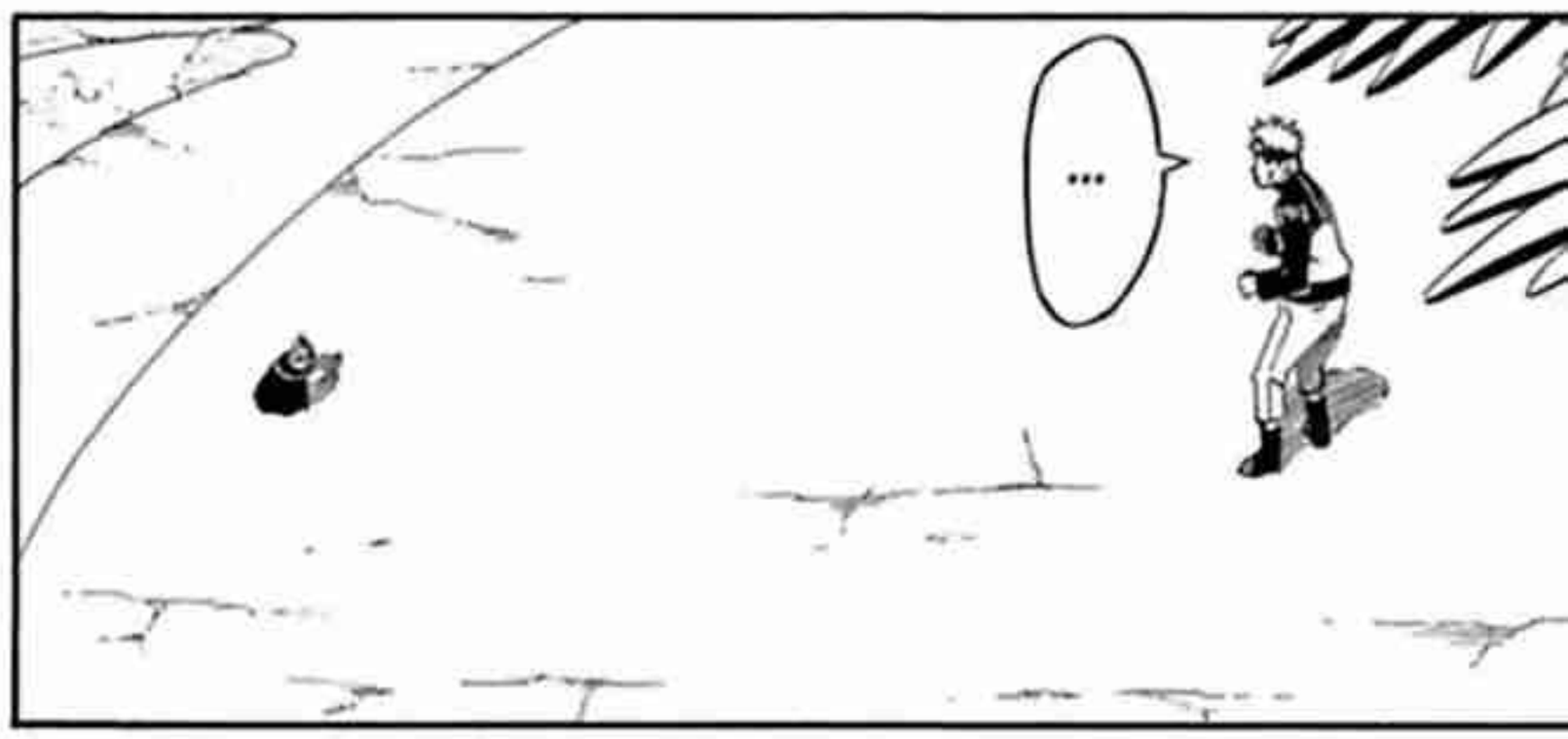
GULP

YEAH!

PRACTICALLY SPEAKIN', IN TERMS OF YER TRAININ'...

DON'T MOVE.

HUH?


...

ISN'T THAT JUST A LITTLE TOO EASY?
SO BASICALLY... I HAVE TO BE STILL?

NARUTO, YA REALLY DON'T GET IT...

...WHEN WE STOP OUR OWN OUR MOVEMENTS N' SYNCHRONIZE OURSELVES WITH THE FLOW OF NATURE.
WE ANIMALS CAN ONLY APPRECIATE AND SENSE NATURE ENERGY...

READ THIS WAY
I'VE DONE ALL SORTS OF TRAINING... LEAPING, RUNNING, MANIPULATING CHAKRA...
...BUT NEVER NOT MOVING... I DON'T REALLY GET IT.
BUT THAT'S HOW YOU TAKE IN NATURE ENERGY, HUH?
THE HARDEST THING FOR AN ANIMAL TO DO IS TO BE ABSOLUTELY STILL.
HEH...
SPRONG
SPRONG
!
THIS IS PRETTY HIGH-LEVEL STUFF.
TMP
IT'S NOT INSTINCTUAL... THIS TRAININ' TAKES TIME.
WHAT IS IT?
WELL IT'S NOT THAT THERE ISN'T, BUT...
THERE ISN'T A SHORT-CUT OR SOMETHING?
YOU KNOW WE DON'T GOT A LOT OF TIME!

TOAD OIL?

THUD
THUD
THUD
THUD
THIS WATERFALL BEHIND ME...THE SECRET TOAD OIL OF MOUNT MYOBOKU.

COME HERE N' HOLD OUT ONE HAND.
?
SHUP

WHAT NOW?
SHUG SHUG

DIP...

FSH
HERE.

HEY, I THINK I FEEL SOME-THING...
WHOA! THAT'S USEFUL!

IT HELPS WITH TRAININ'.
THIS TOAD OIL HAS THE PROPERTY OF ATTRACTIN' NATURE ENERGY.
SHUUG SHUUG

...YOU'LL GAIN THE ABILITY TO SENSE NATURE ENERGY.
N' THEN, GRADUALLY...

...NATURE ENERGY CAN ENTER THROUGH THERE.
WHER-EVER YA RUB THIS OIL ON YOUR BODY...


...USIN' IT IS NOT WITHOUT RISKS.


...N' ALTHOUGH YOU'LL EVENTUALLY BE ABLE TO DO WITHOUT IT...
IT IS A TOOL TA HELP GRASP THE CONCEPT...

PHO
?!
ZWOO...
OM
IF A NEOPHYTE WHO CANNOT CONTROL NATURE ENERGY USES IT, THEY START TRANSFORMIN' INTO A FROG.
AARGH!!

BO
OF

KL
AD

OWW!!
BOW

ARGH! HELP!!
SPROING


I-I'M ME AGAIN!

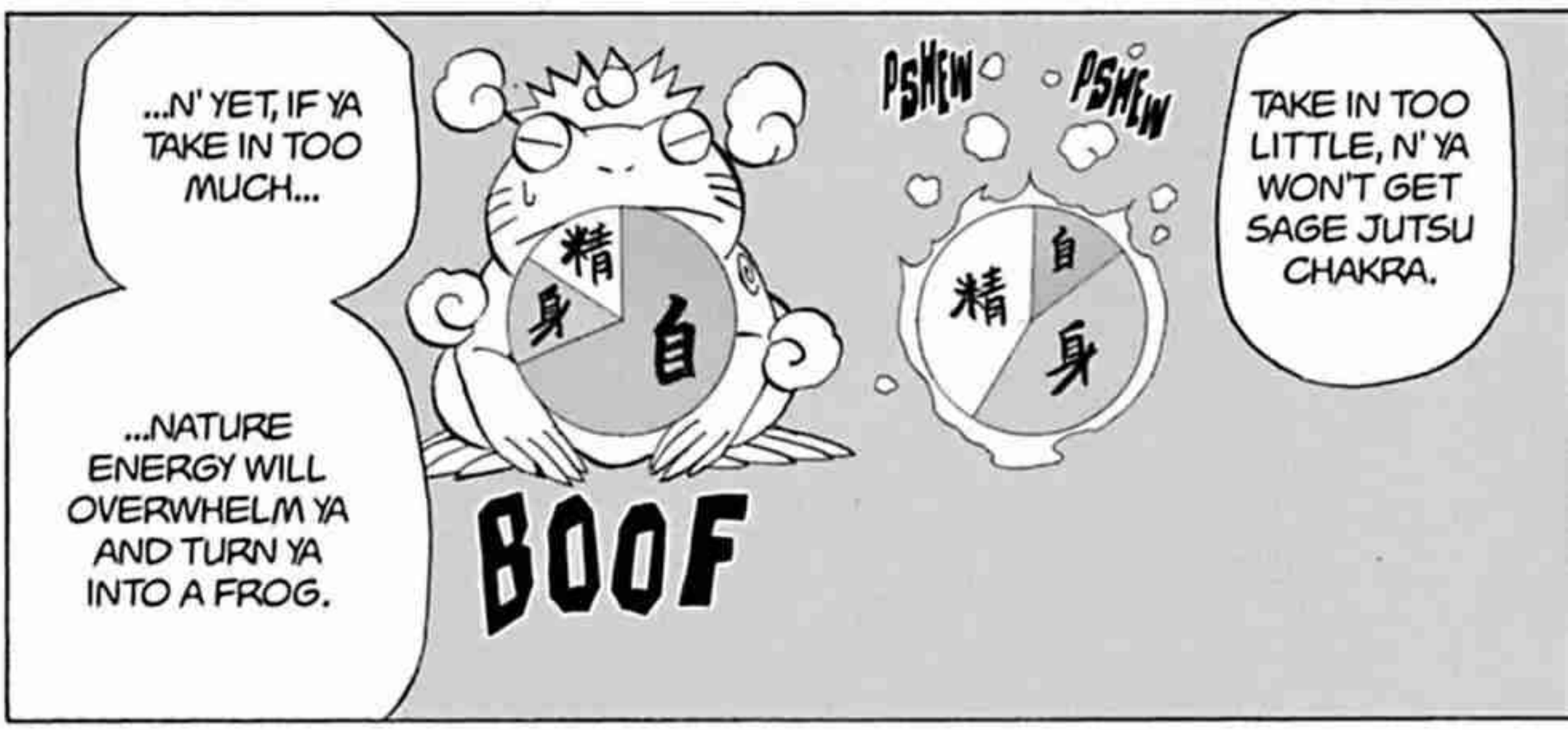
!
WHAT THE...
THAT HURT ...!
TMP

精
自
身
仙
IF YA DON'T MANIPULATE THOSE THREE TOGETHER CAREFULLY, YA CAN'T PRODUCE SAGE JUTSU CHAKRA!!

IT'S ALL ABOUT BALANCE.
BETWEEN MENTAL ENERGY, PHYSICAL ENERGY, N' NATURE ENERGY.

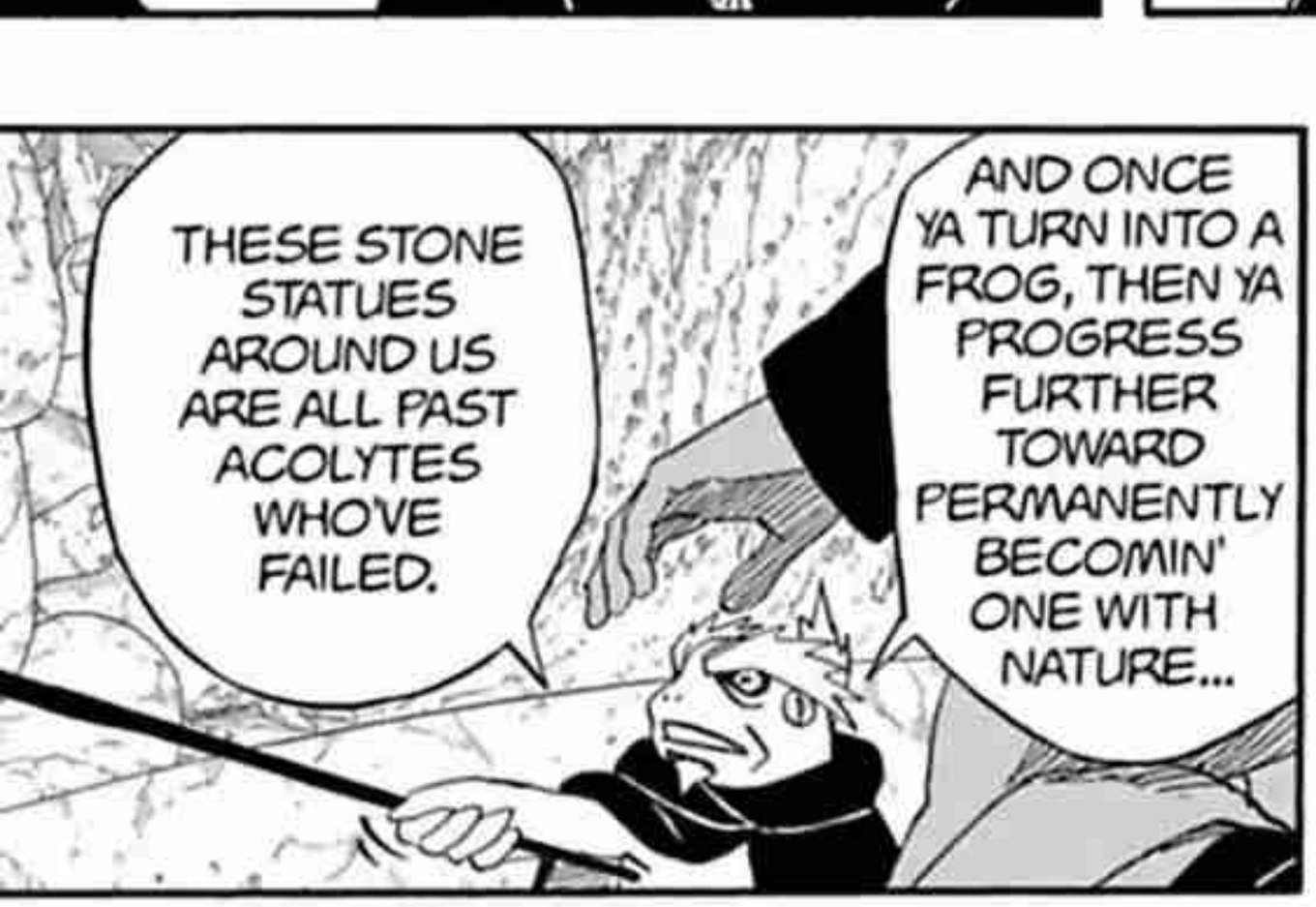
...BUT THEN TO COMBINE NATURE ENERGY HARMON-IOUSLY FROM OUTSIDE IS THE DIFFICULT PART.
IT'S EASY FOR YA TO BALANCE MENTAL ENERGY N' PHYSICAL ENERGY BECAUSE YOU'RE USED TO DOIN' IT FOR REGULAR NINJUTSU CHAKRA...

... BALANCE, HUH...


...N' YET, IF YA TAKE IN TOO MUCH...
...NATURE ENERGY WILL OVERWHELM YA AND TURN YA INTO A FROG.
精
身
自
BOOF
PSHEW
PSHEW
精
自
身
TAKE IN TOO LITTLE, N' YA WON'T GET SAGE JUTSU CHAKRA.

GULP

BUT GET BEYOND A CERTAIN AMOUNT...
...AND YOU'LL NEVER REVERT BACK TO HUMAN AGAIN.
IF YA ONLY TAKE IN A LITTLE TOO MUCH, IT'S REVERSIBLE.


THESE STONE STATUES AROUND US ARE ALL PAST ACOLYTES WHO'VE FAILED.
AND ONCE YA TURN INTO A FROG, THEN YA PROGRESS FURTHER TOWARD PERMANENTLY BECOMIN' ONE WITH NATURE...

WHAT I MEANT ABOUT YA HAVIN' TO DIE IS THAT YA MIGHT STOP BEIN' HUMAN.

THIS BATON IS A TOOL THAT BEATS NATURE ENERGY OUT OF ONE'S BODY.

WELL... DON'T FRET TOO MUCH... I'LL BE RIGHT AT YER SIDE.

ALL OF THEM...?

...

IF YA START TRANSFORMIN' INTO A FROG, NARUTO-BOY, I'LL BEAT YA THOROUGHLY TO REVERSE IT.

AND HE WAS ONE OF THE BEST AT IT.

WHEN HE MANIPULATED SAGE JUTSU CHAKRA, JIRAIYA-BOY ALWAYS ACQUIRED SOME FROG FEATURES.

...EVEN JIRAIYA-BOY WASN'T ABLE TO COMPLETELY MASTER THIS.

SPEAKIN' TRUTH-FULLY...

...

NOT THAT I THINK YA'D BALK NOW, THIS LATE IN THE GAME...
...BUT LET ME ASK A LAST TIME... WHAT SAY YA?

FUWAP
...IS THE SAME AS PERVY SAGE'S!
MY SHINOBI WAY...

雲雷峡

EXCELLENT! ONCE AGAIN, NICELY SAID!

SO BEFORE YOU GET ALL DISINTEGRATED... OWW.
YEAH, THIS BATTLE Y'ALL INITIATED, BUT I'LL LEAVE YA HUMILIATED ♪
...

EIGHT TAILS, THAT BE ME, DA RAPPIN' KILLER BEE!
SHEENG
YO, MY POWER'S ALL A-FLASH, WITH SOME STILL LEFT IN MY STASH ♪
FA SHOW!

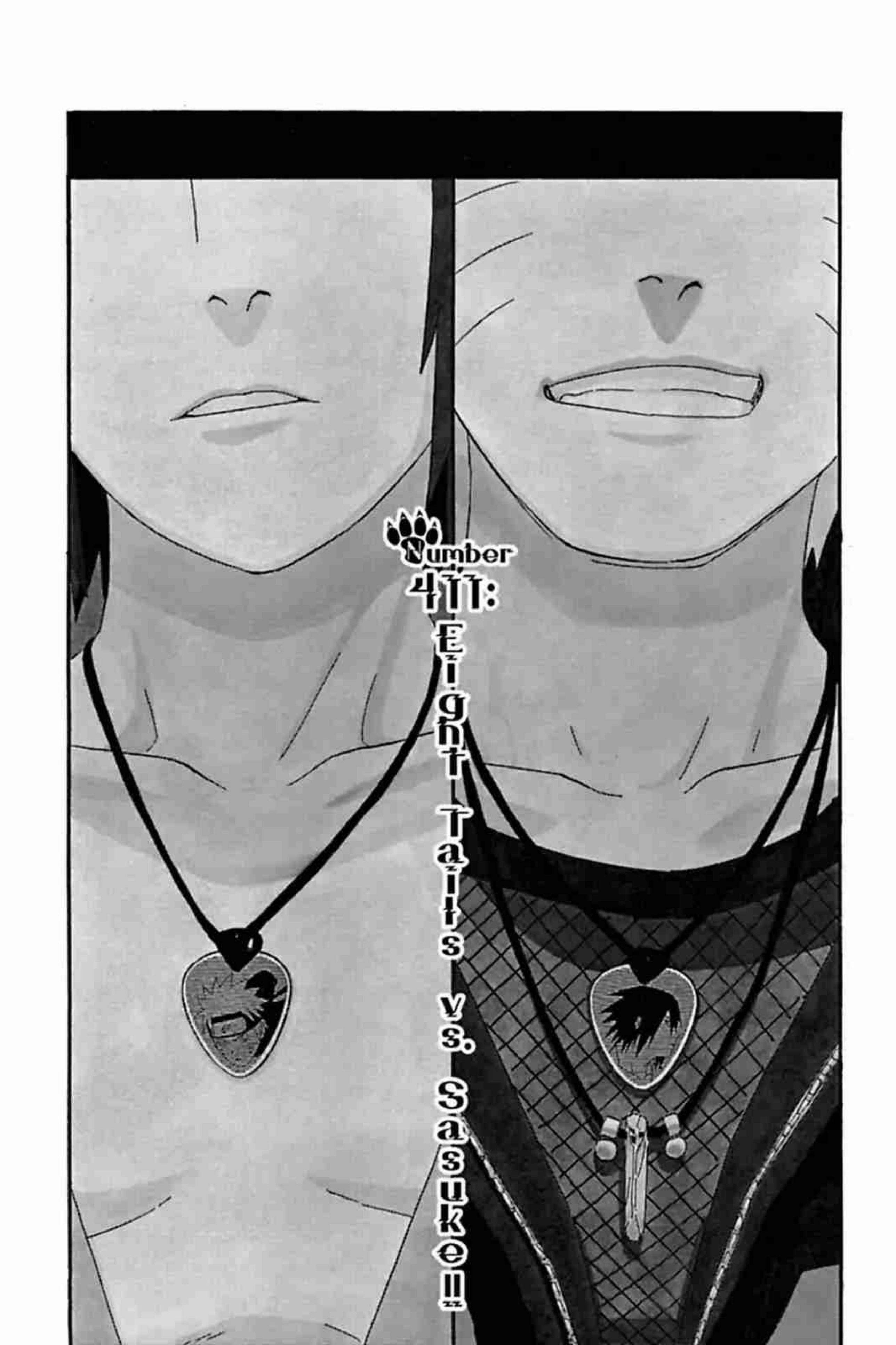
WHO AND WHAT IS HE...
HE'S ALSO WIELDING MY EXECUTIONER'S BLADE SO SMOOTHLY...

RMMMR...
BIT MY TONGUE ...
...

I CAN'T BELIEVE SUCH AN UNINTELLIGIBLE OAF GOT THE BETTER OF JUGO...
WH-WHAT IS UP WITH THIS GUY...?

SHUP
I'LL DO IT.

UGH...
ZWOOO...


Number 411:
Eight Tails vs. Sasuke!!

SHUP

SHUP

FSH!

YA MADE ME BITE MY TONGUE, YO!

SHUP

HE'S GETTING ON MY NERVES...

GIVE ME A BREAK.

FOOLS, YA FOOLS ♪

WHO THE HECK ARE Y'ALL?

...

TWP

YOU ALL RIGHT, JUGO?

I AM UNDER NO OBLIGATION TO TELL YOU.
SHUP

YO, WHO ARE YA?
WHY YA WANNA CAPTURE ME? EH?!

THAT'S YOUR PREROGATIVE.
IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT, LEAVE.
IN ORDER TO OBTAIN POWER AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

...WHAT A BOTHER.
WHY DO WE HAVE TO FIGHT SUCH A WEIRD RHYMING FELLOW ANYWAY...

SSSH...

...TO GIVE US THE TAILED BEASTS IS TRUE OR FALSE.
FRAMP FRAMP
AND I WANT TO CONFIRM WHETHER THEIR PROMISE...

EITHER WAY, **WE'RE** THE ONES WHO ARE GOING TO USE THE AKATSUKI, NOT THE OTHER WAY AROUND.

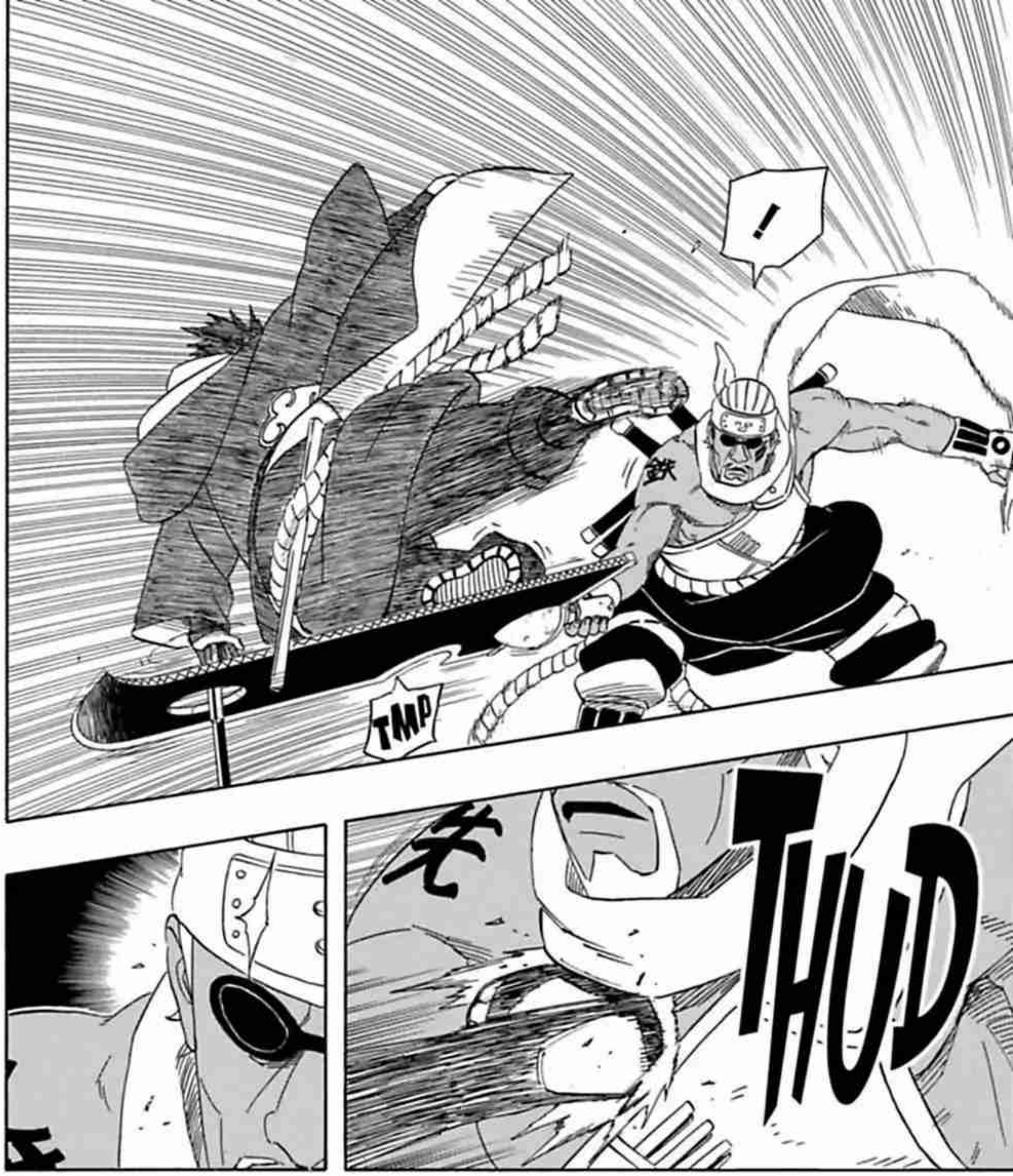
DON'T EVER FORGET THAT.

KLIK

READ THIS WAY
THAT'S THE PLAN.
OKAY, LET'S HURRY UP AND SHUT UP THIS WITLESS PAIN IN THE EAR.
...UGH... WHAT A JOKE!
SQK
HE'S GOT AB-SOLUTELY ZERO RAPPING TALENT!
YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT!
DUN
I AM NOT WITLESS, YO! I GOT CHARMIN' FLOW, FOOL!
PLINK

KLAK
KLANG
WOO
SKRI
TCH

YAN
SHKU
NK
?!


!
鉄
TMP
THUD

KLUNK

...

?
FFSH
RMMMR RMMMR
SSH
...
TMP
FTCK
...
FTAP

KLAK
SO NOW I'M WILLIN' TO PLAY WIT' YA TOOLS ♪
YA TEENY BABY FOOLS ♪

I'M FEELIN' REAL GOOD RIGHT NOW, YO.
JUST PUT DOWN THE BADDEST RHYMES, THANKEE.

THIS GUY'S USED TO HANDLING BLADES...
HE'S NOT AN ORDINARY SHINOBI!
WATCH OUT, SASUKE!

?!

SHOOP
SHOOP
SHOOP

READ THIS WAY
KRNNCH
SHKUK
SHKUK
SHKUK
FW OO
I'LL GIVE YOU A TASTE OF MY HOOK.

WHAT'S UP WITH THAT STANCE?
VR
TAUK

!
KLA-KLA-KLANG
SHOOK
TMP

KLA-KLA-KLA-KLA-KLA-KLA-KLA-KLA-KLA-KLANG
TAK
TAK
TMP
FTHAP
TASH

THUD
SASUKE!
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!
SKRITCH
SHRUTCH
WHAT'S UP WITH THOSE MOVES ?!
YOU CAN BARELY READ HIS LINE OF ATTACK.

READ THIS WAY
...HE'S GOING TO USE SOMETHING THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO DEFEND AGAINST.
THE CHIDORI BLADE...
CHIRP
CHIRP
FWP
FWP
KLIK
TAK

PAAHOP

WHAT ?!

?!

YO, FIRST I'M A' GONNA FLOAT N' FLY... LIKE A BUTTAFLY ♪

!

HE CAN STREAM HIS CHAKRA THROUGH OTHER OBJECTS TOO?!

READ THIS WAY
SHKUNK
SHKUNK
SHKUNK
SHKUNK
THEN I STING YA LIKE A KILLA' BEE ♪

NARUTO

BNHAM!

# Number 412: Quivers of Anticipation

!

SASUKE !!

AND I END MY FLO' WITH DA FINISHIN' BLOW ♪

THK

!
...
HE ALSO USES MY WEAK POINT, RAITON JUTSU...!

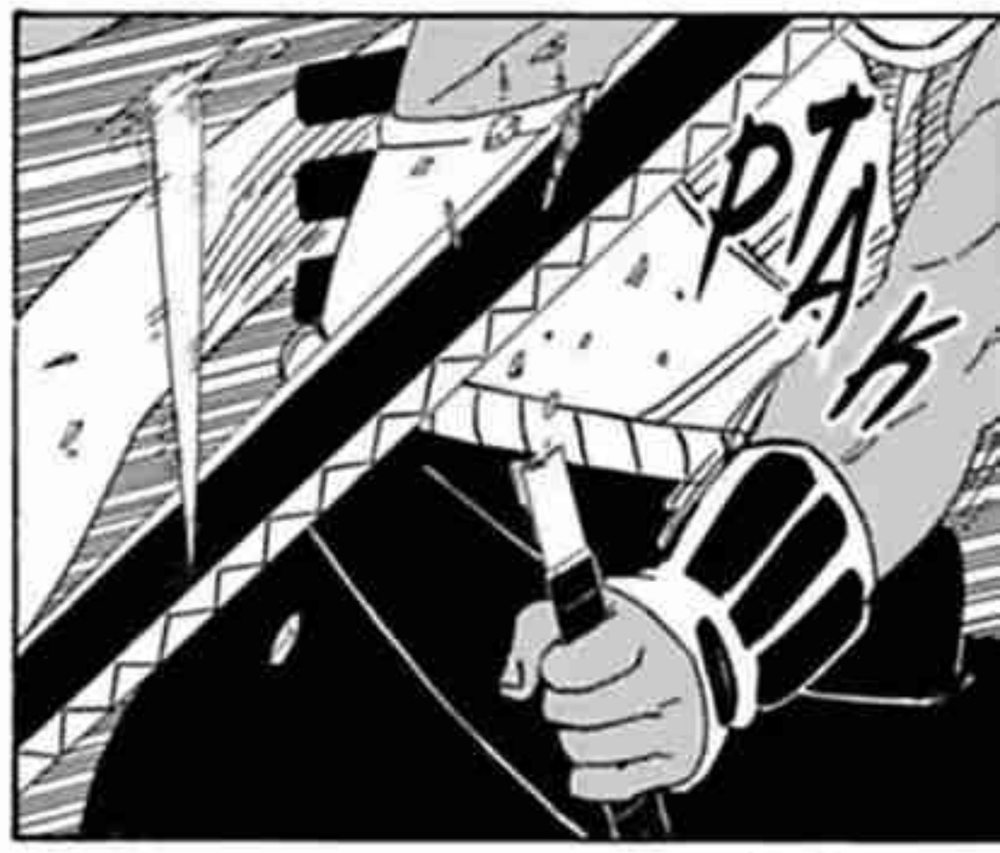
G-
G-
G-
G
TMP
FOOMF
TIKRAK

FWIAP

FWO
HAH!
P

SHRRUK

ZWOOO


PTAK

HOOP

BAKO
OMI

HOOM
BO

THIS IS NOT GOOD ...!
SSH
KATOK

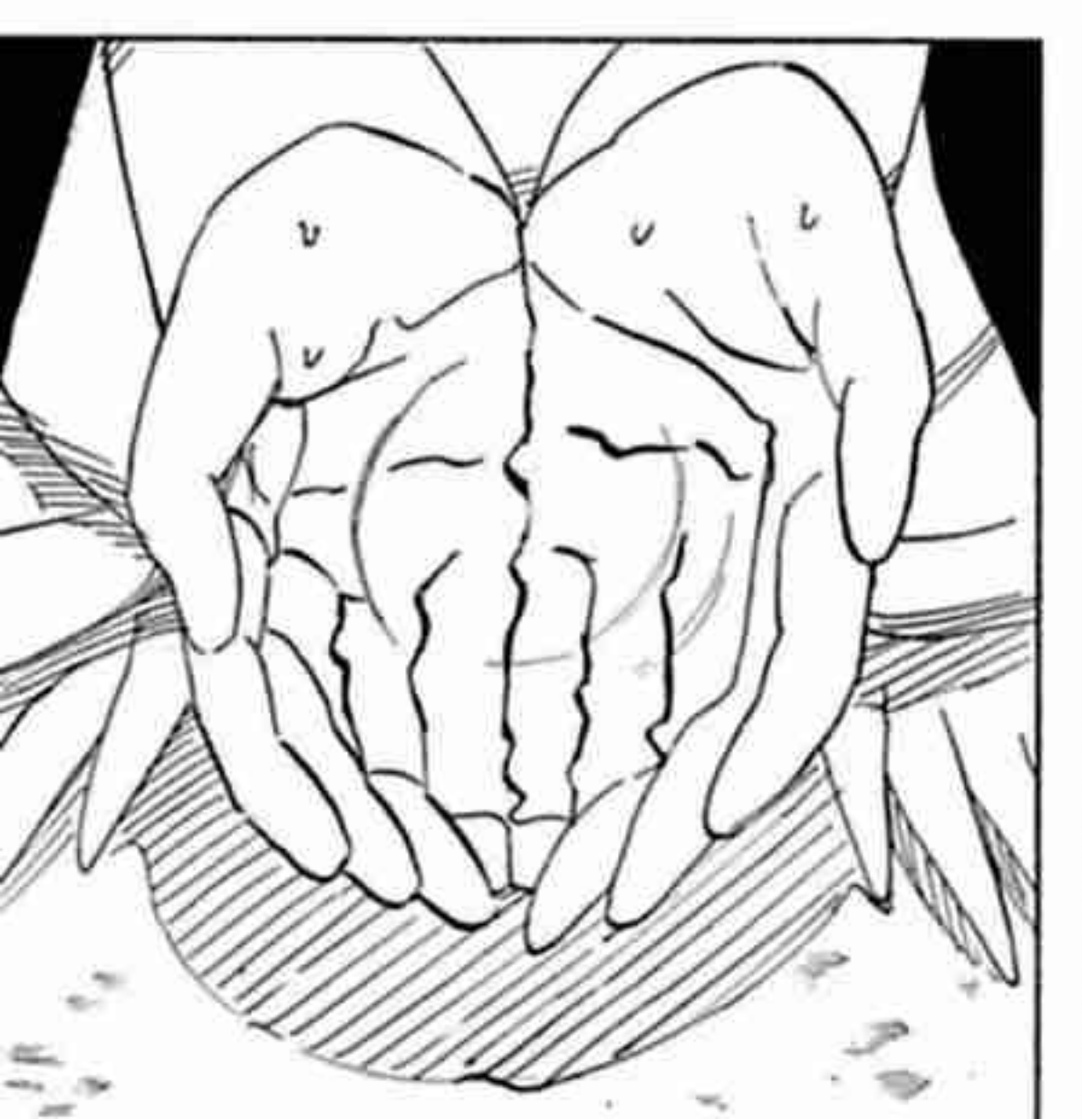
SASUKE!
SQUICH

HERE! HURRY UP AND BITE ME, SASUKE!
DO IT NOW!
SSH...
UNNNNH ...
CHOMP
FUSSSH

SURE...
HUF
HUF
THANKS, KARIN.

THAT WAY WE CAN PROBABLY TAKE HIM DOWN WITHOUT QUITE KILLING HIM.
FACT IS, THIS GUY IS SUPER STRONG.
WE SHOULD GO AT HIM AS IF WE ARE TRYING TO DESTROY HIM, INSTEAD OF NOT!

SASUKE, THE THREE OF US WILL TAKE CARE OF HIM.
HUF HUF



AND... THAT WOMAN POSSESSES THE ABILITY TO HEAL OTHERS BY LETTING THEM SUCK HER CHAKRA, HUH, FEH FEH FEH.
IT SEEMS BY STREAMING RAITON THROUGH HIS BODY TO DEFLECT MY ATTACKS, HE AVOIDED MORTAL INJURY.

SPLOOSH

WHAT, YA QUITTIN' ALREADY?
UGH...
JIRAIYA-BOY NEVER WHINED OR COMPLAINED.

SHWOO SHWOO
WAAH! TOMORROW, I'M GOING TO BE BRUISED AND BLEEDING ON THE INSIDE.

THEY EXPONENTIALLY INCREASE MY PROGRESS!
TRAINING WITH SHADOW DOPPEL-GANGERS.

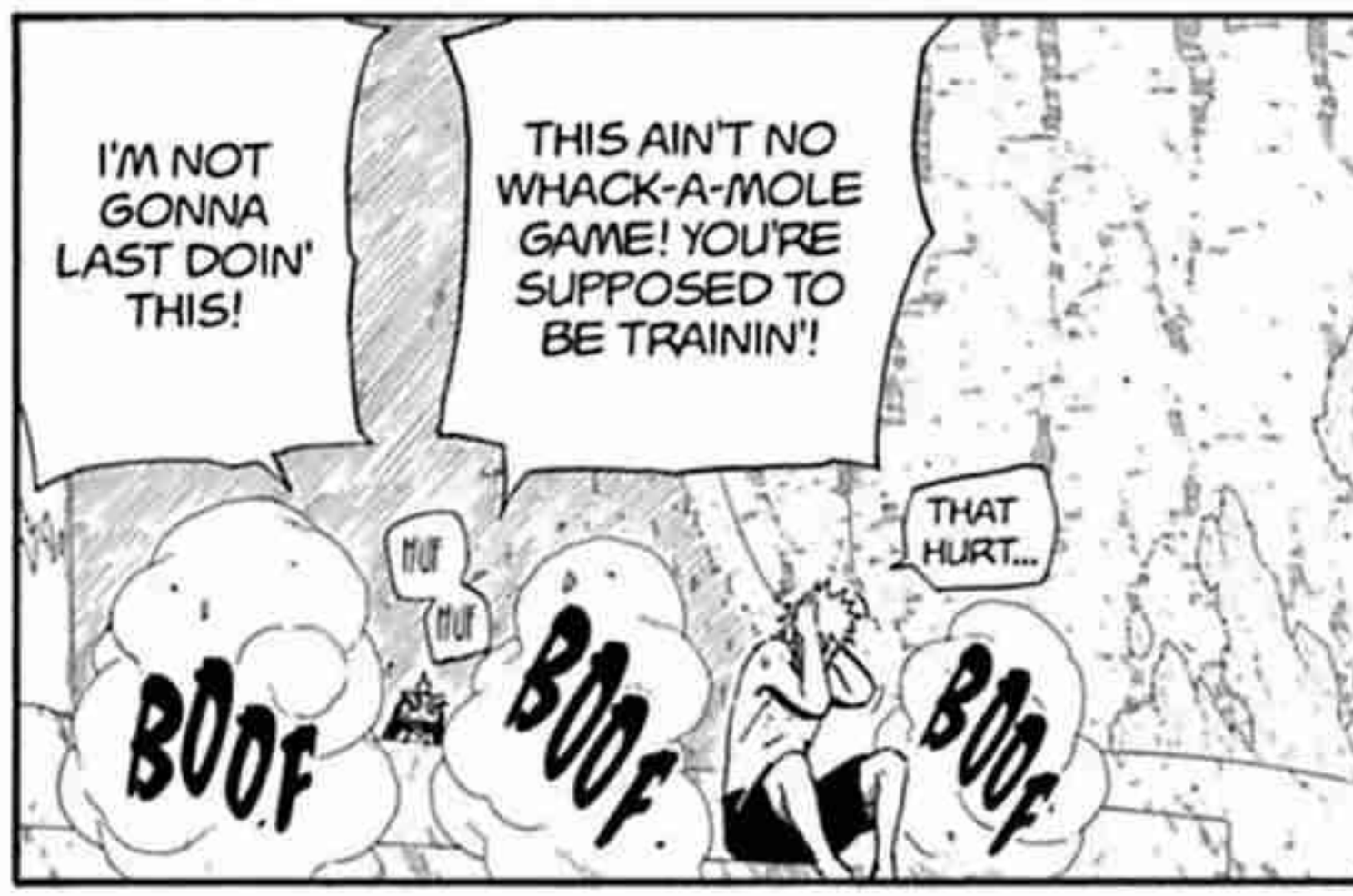
EH? WHAT'S THAT?
HEY— I KNOW A MUCH BETTER TRAINING METHOD!

ZZZ
...!

ME N' MY BATON CAN'T KEEP UP WITH ANY MORE THAN FOUR AT THE MOST!
I KNOW, I KNOW!

...IF ANY OF THEM TRANS-FORMS INTO A FROG, YER DONE FOR!
WHILE IT IS TRUE THAT WHATEVER SHADOW DOPPELGANGERS EXPERIENCE REVERTS BACK TO THE ORIGINAL...

GAH!!
OWW!!
ARGH!
OW!
WHACK THWAP WHACK THOK



READ THIS WAY
IF IT CAN MAKE ME AS STRONG AS PERVY SAGE, I'LL PUT UP WITH ANY-THING!
I KNOW!
ONLY THROUGH PERSEVERANCE SHALL TRUE STRENGTH BE GAINED.
I NEVER THOUGHT TRYING TO SENSE NATURE ENERGY WOULD BE THIS HARD...
UNH... OWWW...
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
YOU COULD SAY IT'S ONLY POSSIBLE BECAUSE IT'S YOU AND JIRAIYA-BOY...
...OR ELSE I WOULDN'T HAVE EVEN BROUGHT YA HERE.
NOT EVERYBODY CAN MASTER THIS TRAININ'...
NAH...THAT'S NOT ALWAYS ENOUGH.
?
...
THAT'S HOW INCREDIBLE NATURE ENERGY IS.
UNLESS YA ALREADY POSSESS ENORMOUS CHAKRA INSIDE OF YA...
...NATURE ENERGY WOULD JUST TAKE OVER YA RIGHT AWAY.

THAT'S WHO CAN BECOME A SAGE.

PLUS, YA GOTTA HAVE GUTS N' NEVER GIVE UP...

TAK

WWEENT

SHOOMSHOOM

FOOL!! DO YA WANT TA DIE?!!

ALL RIGHT! LET'S GET TO IT, THEN!

SPLOOSH

KLANG
KLANG
SHOOM
THOK
FSH
SWISH
TH
UD
TAK
SPLOCH
SASUKE, NOW! JUST DO THE BOTH OF US!!
CHIRP
CHIRP
!

CHIKP CHIKP CHIKP

CHI-DORI!

CHIKP

UGH!

CHIKP BHHAM

WAAAH!!

BOOM
TAK
SWSH
!
PHOOOM
HE'S GONE...
FWOOO
FWOO...

THEY MAY BE PUNY BUT THEY FULL ON LOONEY ♪

I'M DONE PLAYIN', GOIN' HOME AN' GET MY DRINK ON, KNOW WHAD I'M SAYIN' ♪

READ THIS WAY
CAN'T BE HELPED. HERE COMES DA EIGHTH!
SWSH
SP-TO
WHEEEEEEEE!!!!!
TO BE CONTINUED IN NARUTO VOLUME 45!